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CENTRAL ASIA:

FROM

THE ARYAN TO THE COSSACK.

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BY

JAMES HUTTON,

AUTHOR OF

'A HUNDRED YEARS AGO,' 'MISSIONARY LIFE IN THE SOUTHERN SEAS,'

ETC. ETC.



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CENTRAL ASIA:

FROM

THE ARYAN TO THE COSSACK.

CHAPTER I.

GENERAL OUTLINE.

THE ARALO-CASPIAN SEA—GENERAL OUTLINES OF CENTRAL ASIA—THE ARAL SEA—THE UST URT—THE CHINK—HISTORICAL ALLUSIONS—SIR HENRY RAWLINSON'S THEORY—ANCIENT COURSE OF THE OXUS—THE AMOU OF THE PRESENT DAY—THE JAXARTES, OR SYR—THE CASPIAN SEA.

ACCORDING to the late Sir Roderick Murchison,—no mean authority on questions relating to geognosy,—at a time long antecedent to the creation of man, the vast region, familiarly known to the present generation as Central Asia, was covered by a sea that washed the foot of a mountain range, which, at a later period, constituted the boundary lines of Afghanistan and the Chinese Empire. This pre-historic sea was spread over an area computed at 8000 square marine leagues, and extended from the Hindoo Koosh to the European shores of the Black Sea and the Sea of Asof. To this huge depression on the surface of the globe Sir Roderick proposed—in compliment to Humboldt the originator of the theory—to give the name of the Aralo-Caspian Sea, whose denizens appear to have had a purely local range, and to have been clearly distinguishable from the molluscs and other marine animals inhabiting the outer ocean.

At some unknown point in the latest tertiary era the barren plateau between the Caspian and the Aral Seas is believed to have been thrown up by subterranean agencies, followed, at a greater or less interval, by the upheaval of the much fabled range of the Caucasus, the Kaf of Eastern romance and the abode of that marvellous bird the Simurgh, the foe of the Deevs and the friend of man. As no traces, however, have been discovered of the junction of the Euxine with the Caspian, this theory must, to a certain extent, be regarded as rather speculative than scientific, though good grounds may exist for ascribing to volcanic phenomena the separation of the Caspian and the Aral Seas, and the upheaval of the dry lands recently comprising the Khanats of Khwarezm or Khiva, and Bokhara. It is certain that the fossiliferous limestone forming the basis of the steppes contains the identical molluscs,—the cockle, the mussel, and the spirorbis—which, according to General Abbott, still exist in the waters of those two inland seas. Nor is it less indisputable that the surface of the Aral is upwards of a hundred feet higher than that of the Caspian, the elevation of the rugged intervening plateau, known as the Ust Urt, averaging 600 feet above the level of the ocean.

For our present purpose it may suffice to define Central Asia as the much varied region bounded on the west by the Caspian; on the south-west by the Persian Province of Khorassan; on the south by Afghanistan, Kashmeer, and Little Tibet; on the east by the Chinese Empire; on the north by the river Irtish; and on the north-west by the Ural river. The general aspect of this immense tract is fairly, if roughly, described by a writer in Pinkerton's Collection: 'Between Great Tartary on the north, and Tibet, India, and Persia on the south, there runs a long tract of land, extending from the Great Kobi, or desert on the north-west part of China, westward as far as the Caspian Sea. This country is situated in a sandy desert with which it is

surrounded; or, rather, is itself a vast sandy desert, interspersed with mountains and fruitful plains, well inhabited, and watered with rivers. Nature seems to have divided this region into three large parts, by the names of the countries of Karesm, Great Bucharia, and Little Bucharia.'

Towards the north-west, enclosed between barren rocks and arid steppes, the basin of the Aral Sea—the Blue Sea of the Russians—occupies a space 360 miles in length from north to south, by 240 miles in extreme breadth from east to west: equivalent to an area of 86,400 square miles. On the east and north this expanse of brackish water is surrounded by clay plains ridged by hillocks of loose drifting sand, while on the west it is divided from the Caspian by the Ust Urt, a rocky, unculturable waste, 240 miles in length by 160 miles in breadth, and rising almost precipitously from the sea, but sloping gradually to the westward. It is, in fact, a continuation of the great steppe possessed by the Kirghiz Kuzzaks, and more particularly belongs to the Lesser Horde. At its south-eastern extremity it terminates abruptly in a bold escarpment some 500 feet in height, at the foot of which a level plain spreads out to an enormous distance. From this point the high land turns sharply to the west-north-west, and the angle thus formed is called by the Kirghiz, The Chink.

The southern portion of the sea is extremely shallow, and swarms with small islands, whose inhabitants live chiefly upon fish, and are described as skilful boatmen venturing upon the use of sails, while the Kirghiz are content to ply the oar. The Aibugir Lake, or Gulf, at the south-western extremity of the Aral, was overgrown with canes when visited by M. Kühlewein in 1858, although it received the Laudan, an important branch of the Amou. This gulf is stated to be eighty miles long by twenty miles broad, and appears to have been dried up at the time of the late Russian expedition, through the diversion of

the Laudan by the Khivese for purposes of irrigation. It is only near the mouth of the Amou that the water of the Aral is drinkable, being elsewhere exceedingly brackish. Carp and a small sturgeon are caught in considerable quantities.

To the Arab geographers the Aral was only known as the Sea of Khwarezm, by which name and that of the Sea of Urghunj it is still called by the people of the Khanat. According to Generals Mouravief and Romanof, Aral Denghiz, the Kirghiz appellation, signifies the Sea of Islands, while others maintain that its proper signification is the Sea of Eagles. It was first surveyed by Admiral Alexis Boutakof, by whom also the first steamship that ever churned these waters was launched and navigated. Moved more by an abstract love of science than by patriotic considerations, the Royal Geographical Society, in 1867, presented their Founder's Medal to that gallant officer, whose extension of geographical knowledge has been since otherwise appreciated and utilized by his own government.

Although on a level with the Euxine, the Aral, as already remarked, is more than one hundred feet above the surface of the Caspian, and the Toorkomans maintain that at Kara Goombuz the waters from the one sea may be heard flowing to the other, under-ground. If it be true that such sounds are at times audible, they are probably caused by subterranean drainage from the Amou, some portion of whose waters may follow underground their old course towards the Caspian. The Toorkomans who dwell on the shores of the Kara Bhugaz Bay account for the remarkable current into that gulf, by the theory that the overflow of the Caspian thence escapes by a covert channel communicating with the Aral, the comparative elevation of the two seas being a point quite beyond their comprehension.

As a scientific fact it may be stated that there is no outlet for the redundant waters of either, and that the adjacent lands are saved from flooding by evaporation alone. Were it not for

this powerful agent of nature, the depth of the Aral, if General Abbott's estimate may be credited, would be annually increased twenty-six inches by the influx of the Amou and the Syr, and to at least an equal extent through the snow and rain that fall on its surface or drain into it from the steppes. Although of considerable depth in the centre, the Aral is not above two or three feet deep near the southern and eastern shores, so that its waters become speedily heated under the fierce rays of the sun of Khiva. There is, besides, good reason to believe that the volume of the Amou has sensibly diminished within quite recent times, through the desiccation of many of its affluents. These again have gradually dried up through the decrease of the glaciers in the high mountains, observed by M. Semenof, and through the neglect of their channels due to the diminution of the agricultural population by incessant strife and bloodshed. It is in this manner that eminent geographer accounts for the drying up of the branch of the Amou which formerly turned off to the south-west and fell into the Caspian, for he holds to the opinion that even at that time the main channel of the river proceeded in a northerly direction to the Aral.*

* The late Colonel Romanof who was on the personal staff of the Grand-Duke Nicholas Constantinovitch during the recent campaign, made some very pertinent remarks on this subject in one of his interesting letters headed 'On the way to Khiva!'

'The station of Katty Kul,' he says, 'was founded near a sweet-water lake, which is now completely dried up, and the supply of water is obtained from a well eight versts from the station. The transformation of sweet water into salt, and the desiccation of the latter, are very remarkable and constantly recurring phenomena in all the steppes of Central Asia. Within the memory of many the water in the rivers Irghiz, Turgai, Sarysu, and others was fresh, but now it has a bitter salt taste. The site for the recently-constructed fort of Lower Emba was chosen on Lake Masshe, chiefly because its water was fresh. When the fortress was built the lake became salt, so that now the garrison have to procure their supply of water from wells in which the water is brackish. The gradual, but very perceptible, diminution of the lakes and other water-basins of Central Asia, arising from the excessive dryness of the climate, is

The historians of Alexander the Great make no mention of the Aral, nor does any allusion to it occur in the pages of any classical writer until early in the second part of the fourth century of the Christian era, when Ammianus Marcellinus speaks of two rivers that rushed down headlong from the mountains, and, descending into the plains, commingled their waters and formed the Oxia Palus. In Dr Smith's Dictionary of Greek and Roman Geography, however, it is suggested that the Oxia Palus is identical with the Karakul Lake, which is now the termination of the Kohik, or river of Samarkand. Both Herodotus and Strabo appear to have had some knowledge of a series of lagoons watered by the overflowing of the Jaxartes, which was supposed by most early writers to empty itself into the Caspian some 80 parasangs from the mouth of the Oxus. The Aral, when first recognized as something more than a region of pools and swamps, was regarded as the extreme eastern portion of the Caspian, which was thought to communicate, by a long narrow strait, with the Northern Ocean.

Sir Henry Rawlinson rejects Humboldt's theory—adopted by Sir R. Murchison—of the Aralo-Caspian Sea that once filled the entire concavity of Turan, extending to the Black Sea, the Northern Ocean, and the Balkash Lake. Briefly, Sir Henry maintains that from B. C. 600 to A. D. 500, that is, for a period of 1100 years, both the Oxus and the Jaxartes emptied themselves into the Caspian, and that the Aral did not then exist as an inland sea. Even so late as A. D. 570, when Zemarchus, the Byzantine envoy, was returning to the west from the encampment of the Khakhan at the foot of the Ak-tagh, or White

an undoubted fact, and can be proved by the division of the large Lake of Alakul into three smaller basins, the separation of Lake Chelkar-Tenghiz, which receives the water of the Irghiz, from the bay of the Aral Sea, Sary-Cheganak, with which it was at one time united, and many other instances of a similar kind which have occurred in the steppe.'

Mountains, to the north of Samarkand, the Aral was only entitled to the appellation of a reedy marsh, though some thirty years afterwards the Oxus may have ceased to fill its western branch, and have kept to its direct northern channel. About that time the Sea of Kardar, or south-western portion of the Aibûgir Lake, which had hitherto been fed by the Urghunj branch, became dried up, and exposed to view the ruins of a treasure city submerged in a remote age. According to Persian traditions these ruins were successfully excavated and rifled for a period of twelve years, and are placed by General Abbott, under the name of Berrasin Gelmaz, in a small island, though Admiral Boutakof fixes the locality of 'Barsa Kilmesh' in a salt marsh a little to the west of the Aibugir Lake.

For the next 600 years the Aral is described by the Arab geographers in terms that might be applied to it at the present day, though between the ninth and twelfth centuries three successive capital cities, situated at the apex of the Delta, were destroyed by sudden floods. The course of the river, too, was constantly shifting, according to the greater or smaller quantity of water diverted from the main channel for purposes of irrigation. In A. D. 1221,—Sir Henry continues,—Octai or Okkadai Khan, the son of Chinghiz Khan, when besieging Urghunj, broke down the dam that regulated the flow of the waters, and directed the full force of the stream against the walls of the town, which, being built of clay, were speedily undermined and swept away; about three years later the Oxus again forced its way to the Caspian, and the desiccation of the Aral commenced at the same time.

The elder Poli travelled from the Volga to Bokhara about 1260 A. D., by a route which must have taken them across the Aral, but that sea is not once mentioned by Marco Polo. Again, in 1330, Hamdullah Mustowfi describes the Amou as flowing from Hazarasp, a town about 40 miles south-east of the

modern town of Khiva, by the Muslim Pass and Kurlawa to Akricheh on the Caspian, near the mouth of the Attrek,—traces of which course were seen by General Abbott in 1840. The same geographer remarks that, owing to the divergence of the Amou in the previous century, the level of the Caspian was sensibly raised, and that the post of Aboskun at the mouth of the Attrek was consequently overwhelmed. During the whole of the 14th century the entire volume of the Amou was poured into the Caspian, while the Jaxartes, or Syr, lost itself in the sands of the desert, but early in the 15th century an anonymous writer, whom Sir Henry Rawlinson suspects to have been Shah Rokh's minister,—and whose manuscript he obtained at Herat, —speaks of the Aral as being dried up, through the drainage into the Caspian of the waters of the Jyhoon and Syhoon, the names given by Mohammedan geographers and historians to the Oxus and Jaxartes.

So far back as the middle of the 13th century the Franciscan Friar, William de Rubruquis, states that the Jaxartes, after creating numerous swamps, was lost in the desert, and about the year 1340 Pegoletti advises travellers bound for Tatary to leave Urghunj to their right, and to strike straight across from Saraichik on the Yaik, or Ural river, to Otrar on the Jaxartes, a route that would traverse the bed of the Aral: nor does that sea appear in the Catalan map of 1375. In short, the existence of the Aral Sea depends upon its two great tributaries, the Amou and the Syr. When the former is deflected, the bed of the sea contracts, and the Syr, being no longer able to force its way to the receding shores, becomes absorbed in reedy marshes.

There can be no doubt that in ancient times the main branch of the Oxus disembogued itself into the Caspian, for both Strabo and Pliny tell us how the merchandise of India was conveyed across the mountains to a stream that flowed into the Oxus, how it descended that river to the Hyrcanian or Caspian

Sea, how it was taken across to the mouth of the Cyrus,—now the Kur,—which it ascended until it could be carried across to the Phasis,—the modern Rion,—down which it dropped till it reached the Euxine, whence it was transported to the various countries of Europe. In those days the Oxus was known as the river that divided Bactria from Sogdiana, and it plays a conspicuous part in the campaigns of Alexander the Great, whose troops, in pursuit of Bessus, crossed it on inflated skins stuffed with straw. The name is an obvious Greek corruption of Wakhsh, a small state lying between the Karategeen range and the petty principality of Darwaz. By the Mohammedan* invaders it was called simply Al-Nahr, or The River, and the country to the eastward Mawaralnahr—the Maverulnere of the 'Arabian Nights,'—signifying Transamnia, corresponding to the modern Transoxiana. Their writers, however, adopting the fable that the Garden of Eden was placed at the head of the Badakhshan valley, and imagining that the sources of the Jaxartes were near those of the Oxus, confounded these rivers with the Mosaic Gihon and Pison, and corrupted those names respectively into Jyhoon and Syhoon. To the Oozbegs the Oxus is known as the Darya-i-Amou, or the River of Amou, while the Khivese, according to General Mouravief, call it the Amin Darya, and the Persians, if Mr Bell be a sufficiently good authority, the Ab-telah, or Water of Gold, in allusion to its auriferous sands.

Ibn Haukal, who wrote in the 10th century, speaks of the Jyhoon as flowing into the Sea of Khwarezm—the Aral—which was in no way affected by the rivers it received into its basin, the redundant waters being carried off to the Sea of Khozr by a secret communication. He adds that in the lower, or northern, part of its course it was covered every winter with such thick

* Hiouen Tsang gives Potsou as the Chinese equivalent, while in the old Zoroastrian books it appears as the Veh-rood, and in Sanscrit as Vanksou.

strong ice that loaded carts were driven across from one bank to the other. At the commencement of the 15th century the Portuguese ambassador, Ruy Gonzalez de Clavijo, alludes with reverence to the Viadme, as he calls it, and describes it as one of the rivers that descended from Paradise. It attains, he says, a league in width, and traverses a flat country with great and wonderful force, until, at last, it reaches its goal in the Sea of Baku—one of the many names of the Caspian. Its muddy waters, he continues, are lowest in the winter season, when its sources in the mountains are congealed, but in April the melting snows begin to fill its broad, deep bed, and for the next four months it is a noble river.

In 1558, Anthony Jenkinson, the shrewd and adventurous representative of the London 'Muscovy Company,' mentions, that on the 5th October he 'struck' a gulf of the Caspian—though it is far more likely to have been the Aibugir Gulf of the Sea of Aral—where the water was fresh and sweet. 'Note,' he continues, 'that in times past there did fal into this gulf the great river Oxus, which hath his springs in the mountains of Paroponisus in India, and now cometh not so far, but falleth into another river called Ardock, which runneth toward the North, and consumeth himself in the grounde, passing undergrounde above 500 miles, and then issueth out againe, and falleth into lake of Kithay.' A little further on he attributes the desiccation of the Oxus to the numerous canals of irrigation it had to supply, and complains that 'the water that serveth all the countrey is drawen by ditches out of the river Oxus, unto the great destruction of the said river, for which cause it falleth not into the Caspian Sea as it hath done in times past, and in short time all the land is like to be destroied, and to become a wilderness for want of water when the river of Oxus shall faile.' Six or seven weeks later, he says, he crossed the great and rapid river Ardock, a branch of the Oxus, running 1000 miles to the

northward,—for half of that distance passing under-ground, then issuing from beneath the earth's surface and terminating in 'the Lake of Kitay.'

It is not a little singular that Jenkinson should make no allusion to the Aral as the recipient of the river he calls the Ardock, which could be no other than the main channel of the Oxus, and which some later writers designate as the Khesel or Kizil, that is, the Red River. In Pinkerton's Collection the Khesel is said to take its rise in the mountains to the north-east of Sogdiana, and to fall into the Aral 50 or 60 miles after receiving the Amou. The writer has here evidently confounded the source of the Amou with that of the Syr, but he goes on to explain how the Khesel, which formerly fell into the Caspian at St Peter's Bay, was in 1719 diverted from that channel by the Tatars, in the hope of destroying by thirst the expedition commanded by the gallant but ill-fated Prince Beckovitch. The Dutch Orientalist Bentinck, in his notes to the 'Histoire Généalogique des Tatares'—published in 1720—describes the Oxus as bifurcating about 40 leagues from its embouchure; the left arm turning off to the Caspian, while the right arm, which 80 years previously flowed under the walls of Urghunj, then fell into the Kizil, to the ruin of that once flourishing city, and so passed on to the Aral. Jenkinson's confusion is no doubt attributable to his own ignorance of Persian and Toorkee, and consequent dependence on the intelligence and good faith of his interpreter.

That the Oxus did at one time, perhaps at several times, empty itself into the Caspian is a fact that cannot be disputed. The unfortunate Conolly proceeded for some distance up the deserted bed, whose width he estimated at 2000 paces, and General, then Captain Mouravief, met with verdure, reeds, and pools, along the deep broad channel excavated by the mighty river, which seems to have finally divided into two branches

inclosing the present peninsula of Dardji. According to the latter writer the Syr formerly effected a junction with the Amou, but an earthquake, which is said by the Khivese to have happened in the 14th century, separated the two rivers and gave them each the course they now hold. This earthquake is a very questionable event, though it is mentioned also by Baron Meyendorf as an item of Khivese faith, but he adds that others assert that the south-western channel was dammed up in 1670 to check the ravages of the Kuzzaks.

About the middle of the 18th century Captain Woodroofe, while engaged in surveying the Caspian, under Captain Elton's orders, by desire of Nadir Shah, was informed that 'it is now a hundred years since the Oxus emptied itself into the upper end of this (Balkan) Bay,' and he adds that, the river drying up in many places through the intense summer heat, the Toorkomans had imagined that by closing the mouth they would retain the water in the channel. The result, however, proved contrary to their expectations, for the river, having no longer any current to clear away the sand that was continually being blown into it, became choked and gradually silted up altogether. This version is adopted also by M. Khanikof, who mentions, in addition, the construction of a second dam to the eastward of Kunya or Köhne Urghunj, which effectually turned the Amou to the north.

General Abbott's theory is probably as near the truth as need be desired. The natural course of the Oxus, he says, would be to the Aral, but at some remote period it must have encountered an obstacle that deflected its waters through the easier country lying to the westward. At the same time it never ceased battering the barrier which opposed its proper course. until at length a breach was effected, when it rushed straight onwards to the Aral. General Abbott is further of opinion that many centuries ago the Syr and the Amou met a

little to the north of Urghunj, and that while a small portion of the out-pourings of the former river found its way to the Aral swamp, the main volume rolled on with its sister stream to the Caspian. By degrees, however, the Syr worked out a straight channel for itself to the north-west, while the Amou, relieved from the shock that sent it off to the south-west, also excavated a way to the northward, and thus in the end both rivers separately disembogued themselves into the Aral, as in ancient times they had conjointly deposited their waters in the bed of the Caspian. The old channel of the Amou is still the natural drain of the Kara-koum desert, so that, as already observed, it may not be impossible that the sound of subterranean waters may be heard at Kara Goombuz.

The Oxus, or the Amou, takes its rise in the Pameer Steppe, the loftiest table-land in the world, and known to the people of Central Asia as the Bam-i-Dunya, or the flat, or terraced, roof of the world. The northern branch, issuing from Lake Sir-i-Kul, has been generally accepted as the father of the stream, though the southern branch issuing from the Pameer Kul appears to be somewhat the longer of the two. The northern branch passes by the specific name of the Panja, and on quitting the lake is barely ankle deep, though 15 feet wide, and running at the rate of $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles per hour over a smooth bed. It tends at first in a south-west direction as far as Hissar, where it effects a junction with the Dara Sarhad, the southern branch that flows from the Pameer Kul. From this point it pursues a westerly course to Ishkashm, where it turns suddenly to the north, inclosing in the angle thus formed the once celebrated ruby mines of Badakhshan. Bending north-west-by-north, and then towards the south, it forms nearly a semi-circle, receiving three affluents—the Shakh-dara, the Bartang, and the Surk-ab, or Red River—until it reaches the point where it is joined by the Kokcha, nearly due west from the mouth of the Shakh-

dara. It then proceeds to the westward to the ferry of Khoja Saleh, where it turns to the north-west-by-west to about the 40th degree of latitude, after which it flows nearly due north and falls into the Sea of Aral through many mouths.

The entire length of this historic river may be roughly computed at 1200 miles. From the head of the Delta, which is about 50 miles from its embouchure, the Amou is navigable to Kunduz, a distance of 750 miles. According to Sir Alexander Burnes, the channel is straight and singularly devoid of rocks, rapids, and whirlpools, and rarely impeded even by sand-banks. The depth varies from 6 to 20 feet, with an average current of 3½ miles an hour. It is, however, subject to floods from melting snows, when the water becomes of a reddish hue and is laden with silt, that is finally deposited in the Aral. Above the junction of the Kokcha, and below the town of Khiva, the Amou is frozen every year, and in severe winters even while traversing the desert.

The fertilizing influence of this noble stream does not at present extend further than a mile from its banks, until it reaches the Khanat of Khiva, after which a somewhat broader belt is brought under cultivation. In 1832 there were not above 200 boats throughout the entire course of the river from Kunduz to the sea. These boats are described as measuring 50 feet in length with a beam of 18 feet, and capable of a burden of 20 tons or of conveying 150 troops or passengers. They are the same at both ends, flat-bottomed, about four feet deep, and drawing only twelve inches of water. Their construction is extremely rude. They are built of squared logs of a dwarf jungle-tree, fastened together with iron clamps. Though clumsy, they are strong and durable, and both Timour and Nadir Shah succeeded in making with them bridges, over which their vast hosts passed in safety.

'The Oxus,' observes Sir Alexander Burnes, 'presents many

fair prospects, since it holds the most direct course, and connects, with the exception of a narrow desert, the nations of Europe with the remoter regions of Central Asia.' These lines were written in the pre-railway era, and in any case evince more enthusiasm than foresight. From Badakhshan to Pitniak, a border town of Khwarezm,—a distance of 540 miles,—there is not a single place of any importance within sight of the river. The settled population shuns the sultry valley, and it is only at ferries and the intersections of caravan routes that even villages are to be met with. 'When we also consider,' remarks M. Veniukof, 'that the shores of the Sea of Aral are so barren as to have defied all the attempts hitherto made of founding even a small settlement on them; that the Aral itself is separated from Russia by intervening steppes 530 miles broad; and lastly, seeing the utter impossibility of modifying the character of the Nomad marauders, we shall be justified in asserting that even in the remote future the Oxus can only be a secondary channel for the advance of industry and civilization.'

It is not improbable indeed that the Amou will lose much of its importance now that Central Asia has practically passed into the hands of Russia. So far as the trade with India is concerned, a long overland route can never hope to vie with the direct communication between Bombay and Odessa opened up through the Suez Canal, while the Afghan market is rather of political than commercial significance. Russian enterprise is far more likely to find for itself a profitable field in the command it has acquired of the old caravan route from the Caspian Sea to China, and it is only in the event of an actual collision between the British Government and that of St Petersburg that the valley of the Oxus may be expected again to be in men's mouths familiar as a household word. For some centuries past it has ceased to be an object of interest to any European public, but for all that, to quote Mr Matthew Arnold,

'. . The majestic river floated on,
Out of the mist and hum of the low land,
Into the frosty starlight, and there moved,
Rejoicing, through the hush'd Chorasmian waste,
Under the solitary moon: he flow'd
Right for the Polar Star, past Orgunjé,
Brimming, and bright, and large: there sands begin
To hem his watery march, and dam his streams,
And split his currents; that for many a league
The shorn and parcell'd Oxus strains along
Through beds of sand and matted rushy isles—
Oxus, forgetting the bright speed he had
In his high mountain cradle in Pamere,
A foil'd circuitous wanderer: till at last,
The long'd-for dash of waves is heard, and wide
His luminous home of waters opens, bright
And tranquil, from whose floor the new-bathed stars
Emerge, and shine upon the Aral Sea.'

The 'dash of waters' must be taken as a poetical licence, for the Aral at the mouth of the Amou is but a shallow, isle-bespangled mere. According to Admiral Boutakof, who carefully surveyed the Oxus Delta as well as the Sea of Aral, the river first bifurcates between Kipchak and Khoja-ili, and shortly afterwards divides into several branches, or rather into a network of lagoons. 'The centre part of this portion of the basin forms a sort of depression into which the waters of all the branches, excepting the westernmost, empty themselves in a series of lakes, overgrown more or less with reeds; out of these they again flow off in separate channels, discharging themselves into the Sea of Aral.'

The Delta lies between the two main branches, the Laudan to the westward, and the Kuvan Jarma to the eastward, otherwise called Kuk or Blue River, and lower down the Yangy-Su, or New River. The Laudan where it creeps into the Aibugir Lake is not above 18 inches deep, flowing with a feeble current through a thick growth of reeds, and with so firm a bottom

that a caravan of 1500 camels has walked across without difficulty. To check the inroads of the Yomut or Yamood Toorkomans, the Khivese erected a fort near Bent, and constructed a dam across the upper portion of the stream, which has been more than once destroyed by their implacable tormentors.

The extreme eastern branch, again, fills the lakes Dankara and Tampyné-Ayage and then, as the Yangy-su, flows into the Tushé-bas bight of the Aral, opposite Ermolof Island. The Yangy-su is pronounced by the Kirghiz as Jangy-su, and is consequently sometimes confounded with the Jan-i-Darya, a branch of the Syr that loses itself in the sands. In 1848-49, this was the principal outlet of the Amou, so that the water at Ermolof Island, more than nine miles distant, was quite fresh, whereas ten years later the water close in shore had become undrinkably salt owing to the drying up of the Yangy-su.

Of the intermediate streams the most important are the Ulkun Darya and the Taldyk, but even these are not three feet deep in July, and are of course still shallower before the melting of the snows at the end of March. The frequent changes in the course of these various branches were exemplified by the submerged fields and artificial watercourses which Admiral Boutakof observed over the side of his boat, while traversing several small lakes. For at least 50 miles from its mouth the Amou is wholly unfit for navigation, but by closing some of the minor channels the Russians expect to deepen the Ulkun Darya sufficiently to keep open a constant communication with the town of Kungrad.

Though in every other respect inferior to the Amou, the Syr Darya—the Syhoon of the Arab geographers—is likely to exercise a more direct influence in civilizing Central Asia after the Russian standard. In classical times this river was known as the Jaxartes, mistaken, in wilfulness or ignorance, by Alexander's flatterers for the Tanais or Don. Pliny declares that

its Scythian name was the Silis, while in Bell's Notes to Rollin's Ancient History it is asserted that Jaxartes is a corruption of Ik Sert, or the Great River, and that the Sarts were the people who originally dwelt on the banks of the Sert, and were identical with the Abii—from *ab*, a river,—who sent envoys to Alexander the Great on his reaching the Jaxartes. These Abii are, of course, not to be confounded with Homer's Thracian Abii, who lived upon mares' milk and were famed for their love of justice. The Chinese equivalent seems to have been Ye, while the modern appellation signifies the Yellow River.

The town of Cyreschata, or Cyropolis, was constructed by Cyrus the Great on the left bank of the Jaxartes, which formed the northern boundary of his empire. Imprudently crossing the river and invading the country of the Massagetæ, he lost his army and his life at the hands of their warlike Queen, Tomyris. The same great monarch is said to have built six other cities along the course of the Jaxartes, all of which were destroyed by Alexander, who founded in their place Alexandreia Ultima, probably near the site of the modern Khojend. Ancient writers, as already remarked, made the Jaxartes fall into the Caspian, which it may possibly have done after uniting its waters with those of the Oxus. Strabo, however, deflects one embouchure to a point about 80 parasangs distant from that of the Oxus, and sends all the other channels to the Northern Ocean.

The Syr Darya properly begins at the confluence of the Naryn and the Gulishan not far from the town of Namangan. The former rises on the southern face of the Kirghiz Ala-tagh, and, winding through six degrees of longitude, rushes impetuously through the Ferghana valley, swollen by many tributaries. The Gulishan, again, issues from the Chatyr Kul, and is inferior to the Naryn both in length and in volume. Their united streams, under the name of the Syr Darya, flow a little to the

south of west until reaching Koshteermen below Khojend, where they turn off suddenly to the northward as far as Hazret. From this point to Yany Kurgan the Syr runs in a north-westerly direction, and thence holds on to the westward until it discharges itself into the Aral near the north-eastern extremity of that sea.

During the latter part of its course the Syr Darya receives no tributaries, and its volume is sensibly diminished in crossing the desert. Its total length from the source of the Naryn is estimated at 1200 miles. Below Baildyr Tungai, which is 538 miles above Fort Perofski, the Syr is a noble river, from 300 to 800 yards in width and varying in depth from 18 to 30 feet. It flows between steep clay banks which are often flooded at certain seasons of the year, while its current is computed at from 3 to $4\frac{2}{3}$ miles per hour, according to the period of the day, for it runs with the greatest strength between ten and eleven in the morning, when it decreases in velocity till two in the afternoon, about which time it recovers its former force and rapidity. The steamers which descend at the rate of six to ten miles in the hour are content to mount the stream at one-third of that speed.

At no great distance from its mouth the Syr spreads out into a marshy brackish delta, not above four feet deep in mid-channel and diminishing to a width of 360 feet in the main stream. On both sides a vast plain of grass, or rushes, stretches out far and wide. In 1863 Admiral Boutakof ascended the river as high as Baildyr Tungai, and two years later steamers ascended even to Namangan. That gallant Admiral is said to have surveyed and mapped the Syr for one thousand miles from its embouchure.

According to Captain Meyer the course of the river is persistently shifting more and more to the northward, owing to the slow but continuous rising of the land to the south.

Throughout the steppe beds of ancient rivers may be traced, while semi-fossilized oceanic molluscs occur in masses, showing that the Aral itself has largely receded from its former limits. Sometimes it happens that a tribe dams up a channel to injure an unfriendly neighbour or rival, and straightway all cultivation ceases, and fields and meadows become an arid waste. Not many years since the main channel of the Syr was the Kuvan Darya, which now stops short in a marshy lake near Khoja Niaz, a hundred miles from the Aral. The present main stream is excessively tortuous between Fort Perofski and Fort 2, and the water has sunk so low that it is navigable for rather less than three months in the year, for vessels drawing three feet of water.

It has already been mentioned that the earlier Greek writers regarded the Caspian Sea as a Gulf of the Northern Ocean. Ptolemy, however, observes: 'The Hyrcanian Sea, called also the Caspian, is everywhere shut in by the land, so as to be just the converse of an island encompassed by the water.' By Ibn Haukal it is named the Sea of Khozr, while to the Muscovites it was originally known as the Sea of Kwalis, that being the name they applied to the tribes dwelling near its shores. In the 14th and 15th centuries it was called the Sea of Baku, from the chief port on the western coast, while Abu'l-Ghazee Khan alludes to it in the 17th century by its Persian appellation of the Sea of Kulsum. It was first navigated by Patroclus, the Admiral of Seleucus and Antiochus. The historical associations connected with this sea will, however, be described in a subsequent chapter.

The water appeared to General Abbott as being very salt, but not bitter, and as clear as crystal. The sea lies in a basin of fossiliferous limestone, the eastern shores being low and swampy, but at the north-eastern extremity precipitous cliffs rise almost out of the water to the height of 700 feet. There

are no tides, but, as Jonas Hanway remarks, 'a prodigious current and confused sea' often result from a sudden change of the wind after it has been blowing for some time from the northward.

The Caspian Sea is about 640 miles in length from north to south, and from 100 to 200 miles broad. In the centre it is deep, but shallow at the sides, and, although it receives the waters of eighty-four streams in addition to the stupendous discharge of the Volga, it has no outlet, and preserves its level solely by evaporation. Conjointly with the Aral, it drains an area 2000 miles in length from the sources of the Volga to those of the Syr, and 1800 miles in breadth from the head-streams of the Koanna in North Russia, to those of the Sefid Rood in Koordistan.

The smaller rivers, the lakes, the mountains, and the deserts of Central Asia, will each be described in connection with the countries or provinces to which they respectively belong.

CHAPTER II.

EARLY HISTORY.

EARLY INHABITANTS—SCYTHIANS—UNDER DARIUS AND XERXES—MOUNT IMAUS—MARGIANA—BACTRIA—SOGDIANA—ALEXANDER'S CAMPAIGNS—SIKUNDER ZULKARNAIN—THE GRECO-BACTRIAN KINGDOM—THE PARTHIANS—THE SCYTHO-CHINESE DOMINATION—THE SASSANIDES—ARDESHEER, HORMUZ, FEROZE, KOBAD, NOUSHEERWAN, KHOSROO PURVEZ, YEZDIJERD—ARAB CONQUEST—JUSTINIAN AND DIZABULUS—EMBASSY OF ZEMARCHUS.

In Canon Rawlinson's edition of Herodotus, excellent reasons are given for regarding Armenia as the cradle of the Aryan race. At some very remote period three kindred streams of migration are supposed to have issued, perhaps contemporaneously, from their common source, and to have flowed, one to the northward across the Caucasus, a second in a westerly direction across Asia Minor into Europe, while the third turned to the south-east and stopped only at the Indus. After a time this last-mentioned branch became straitened for space, and, in the 15th century before the Christian era, divided into two floods of emigration and conquest, the one gradually spreading over Hindostan, and driving the Turanian aborigines into the mountains, while the other crossed the Hindoo Koosh and subjected or expelled the Scythian or Turanian races known as Sogdians, Bactrians, Arians (of Herat), Hyrcanians, Arachosians, and people of Ragiana and Media Atropatene, the Modern Azerbijan: here, too, the aboriginal inhabitants fleeing into the mountains and deserts.

Turanian dialects prevailed from the Caucasus to the Indian Ocean, from the Mediterranean to the Ganges, and perhaps

throughout the whole of Asia. Even now they are spoken 'by all the various races which wander over the vast steppes of Northern Asia and Eastern Europe; by the hill tribes of India, and by many nations of the Eastern Archipelago.' This Turanian or Scythic element was still strong in the time of Herodotus. To that stock belonged the Sacæ, the Parthians, the Asiatic Ethiopians, the Colchians, the Sapeiri, the Tibareni, and the Moschi. Closely allied, too, were the Armenians, the Cappadocians, the Susianians, and the Chaldæans of Babylon. The race, however, is now extinct. 'In vain we look for their descendants at the present day. * * The Scyths have disappeared from the earth. Like the American Aztecs, whom they resembled in some degree, they have been swept away by the current of immigration, and, except in the mounds which cover their land, and in the pages of the historian or the ethnologist, not a trace remains to tell of their past existence,'—though some writers have too hastily confounded the Scythians with the Mongolians, attributing a like origin to both.

The empire of Darius Hystaspes—the Gushtasp of Firdousi—was divided into 20 satrapies, of which the Fifteenth comprised the Sacæ and the Caspians, whose joint tribute amounted to 250 talents per annum, while to the Sixteenth belonged the Parthians, the Chorasmians, the Sogdians, and the Herat Arians, whose annual tribute was 300 talents. The army of Xerxes—the Isfundeâr of Firdousi—was largely recruited from the warlike peoples of Central Asia. 'The Bactrians went to the war wearing a head-dress very like the Median, but armed with bows of cane, after the custom of their country, and with short spears. The Sacæ, or Scyths, were clad in trousers, and had on their heads tall stiff caps rising to a point. They bore the bow of their country and the dagger; besides which they carried the battle-axe, or *sagaris*. They were, in truth, Amyrgian Scythians (from the confines of India), but the Persians call

them Sacæ since that is the name they give to all the Scythians. The Bactrians and the Sacæ had for leader Hystaspes, the son of Darius and of Atossa, the daughter of Cyrus. The Arians (of Herat) carried Median bows, but in other respects were equipped like the Bactrians. The Parthians and Chorasmians, with the Sogdians, the Gandarians, and the Dadicæ, had the Bactrian equipment in all respects. The Caspians were clad in cloaks of skin, and carried the cane bow of their country, and the scymitar.' The Bactrians and the Caspians furnished also horsemen, armed like the foot-soldiers.

From Canon Rawlinson's foot-notes we learn that the Hyrcanians, an Arian race, probably inhabited the lovely and well-wooded valley of Astrabad, watered by the river now known as the Gurgan. The Caspian, as mentioned in the preceding chapter, was called the Hyrcanian Sea by the historians of Alexander, and in the Zendavesta this district appears under the name of Vehrkana, the Urkanieh of the 13th century. The Parthians dwelt between the Hyrcanians and the Sarangians, along the southern flank of the Elburz mountains, now called Atak, or 'The Skirt.' The country is at present almost a desert, but covered with extensive ruins, attesting its ancient cultivation. The Parthians were of Scythian origin, and escaped destruction by the Aryans no doubt through the natural difficulties of their position. The Chorasmians, again, were an Aryan people, inhabiting the oasis of Khwarezm, or Khiva,—the Khairizas of the Zendavesta. In Alexander's time they seem to have been independent, and to have been governed by a native ruler, named by the Greeks Pharasmenes, who dispatched a friendly embassy to the 'Macedonian madman.' The Sogdians also came from the Aryan stock. Their country, the Çugdha of the Zendavesta and known to Mohammedan writers as the Vale of Soghd, extended from the Jaxartes to the Oxus, and southward to Bactria. Their capital city Maracanda will

hereafter be mentioned in connection with Alexander. The Αρειοι of Herodotus occupied the rich valley of the Heri-Rood, which is designated Hariva in the inscriptions of Darius.

In the Greek legends of the Assyrian era, no nation is more favourably distinguished than that of the Bactrians, whose apocryphal king Oxyartes is described as valiantly holding his own against Ninus, though finally compelled to yield to the superior arms and fortune of Semiramis. It is certain that the Aryans settled in this province at a very early period, and it is not impossible that Bactra may have been the capital of Persia at a time anterior to the reign of Kei Khosroo, or Cyrus the Great, who experienced considerable difficulty in reducing the Bactrians beneath his sway. In the Hindoo legends of the 3rd and 4th centuries before the Christian era, they appear as the Bahlikas, afterwards easily corrupted into Balkh, the modern representative of Bactra.

A less easy task is it to place the Sacæ of Herodotus, unless they lined the banks of the old channel of the Oxus. They have certainly nothing in common with the Sacia of Ptolemy, which rather corresponds with the provinces of Kashgar and Yarkund. Of Turanian origin, they were famous for their valour, and in Alexander's time fought as allies under the banner of Darius. A century later the Sacæ, in conjunction with kindred tribes of Tatars, overthrew the short-lived Greco-Bactrian kingdom, and occupied the entire region between the Aral and the Indus. They even crossed that river, but sustained a signal repulse about B. C. 56. They were subsequently conquered by the Parthians, and finally absorbed by the Sassanides. Of the Caspians it may suffice to say that they were the ancient inhabitants of the provinces now known as Ghilan and Mazanderan; while the Dadicæ, it is suggested, may have been the ancestors of the Tats or Tajeeks, and may have

emigrated across the Hindoo Koosh from their early settlements beside the Gandarians.

The ancients, it may be briefly added, divided central and eastern Asia into Scythia-extra-Imaum and Scythia-intra-Imaum, the latter comprising Khiva, Bokhara, Khokan, Eastern Toorkestan, and Badakhshan. Their idea of Mount Imaus, however, was as imaginative as Baron Humboldt's description of the Bolor range, which is supposed to have been identical with the former. The name is clearly derived from the Sanscrit *Himavat,—Latine* 'hiems'—which is still preserved in the modern Himalaya. The Bolor mountains, as designed by Humboldt and Carl Ritter, would form the meridianal axis of Central Asia, and from their point of view is correctly enough described in Dr Wm Smith's Dictionary of Greek and Roman Geography, where the Bolor range,—assumed to be the ancient Imaus,—is pronounced to be 'one link of a long series of elevated ranges running, as it were, from south to north, which, with axes parallel to each other, but alternating in their localities, extend from Cape Comorin to the Icy Sea, between the 64th and 75th degrees of longitude, keeping a mean direction of S.S.E. and N.N.W.' Since Humboldt's theory was first propounded, it has been ascertained that his Bolor Dagh is not a chain of mountains, but an extremely elevated plateau, fully 16,000 feet above the level of the sea, intersected by ridges running from east to west, with open stony plains between, broken by gorges and fissures in which both wood and water are found. Mount Imaus was, however, a westerly prolongation of the Hindoo Koosh, or, rather, of the Himalaya.

In the latter half of the 4th century before the Christian era Central Asia, as known to the Greeks, was divided into the three provinces of Margiana, Bactria, and Sogdiana. The first corresponds with Khorassan and the south-eastern portion of the Khanat of Khiva; the second with Badakhshan; and the

third with the Khanat of Bokhara eastward of the Amou. The fertility of Margiana has been the subject of warm eulogies, Strabo affirming that it was no uncommon thing to meet with a vine, whose stock could hardly be clasped by two men with outstretched arms, while clusters of grapes might be gathered two cubits in length. The chief town, since famous as Merv or Merou, was called Alexandreia after its great founder, but falling into decay was rebuilt by Antiochus Soter, and named after its restorer. It stood upon the banks of the Margus,—the Epardus of Arrian, and now the Murghab,—and was finally destroyed towards the close of the last century by Shah Moorad Beg, Khan of Bokhara.*

Bactria, or Bactriana—the Ninth Satrapy under Carius Hystaspes—was a rich and populous district, bounded on the south by the Paropamisus range, on the east by the Pameer Steppe, on the north by the Oxus, and on the west by a desert separating it from the fertile province of Margiana. The Paropamisus mountains, called by Ptolemy the Paropanisus, were unknown to the Greeks previous to the Asiatic conquests of Alexander the Great, and were then supposed to be a continuation of the Taurus or the Caucasus. They appear to correspond with the modern Hazaret branch of the Himalayas and extend for 400 miles from the site of Herat to the eastward, and are inferior in elevation to the chain that takes its name from its highest peak, the Hindoo Koosh, being covered with snow for no more than four months in the year. They are, in

* The natural beauties of this once charming district, the scene of Moore's 'Veiled Prophet of Khorasan,' have been fitly celebrated by that poet:—

'In that delightful Province of the Sun,
The first of Persian lands he shines upon,
Where all the loveliest children of his beam,
Flow'rets and fruits, blush over every stream,
And, fairest of all streams, the Murga roves
Among Merou's bright palaces and groves.'

truth, not so much a chain as a confused mass of barren and rugged mountains 200 miles across from north to south at the base line. The Paropamisan Alexandreia stood at the southern foot of the Bamian Pass, and was intended to secure an unmolested passage into Bactria. In addition to its northern boundary, the Oxus, this district was fertilized by five tributaries of that noble river, and by the Bactrus, now the Dahash, descending from the Paropamisus and passing under the walls of Bactra—the Zariaspa of Strabo and Pliny—but better known by its modern appellation of Balkh.* The country generally is so graphically described by Quintus Curtius that no apology need be offered for transcribing John Brende's quaint translation of the passage:—

'The nature of the soyle of whiche countrey is divers and of sundrye kindes. Some place is plentifull of woode and vines, and aboundaunte of pleasaunte fruite, the grounde fatte, well watered, and full of springes. Those partes which be most temperate are sowed with corne, and the rest be reserved for fedyng of beastes. But the greater part of the countrey is couered ouer with baraine sandes and withered up for want of moisture, nourishing neither man, nor bringinge forth fruite. But with certaine windes that come from the sea of Ponte (the Caspian), the sand in the plaines is blowen together in heapes, which seme a farre of like great hilles, wherby the accustomed wayes be damned, so that no signe of them can appere. Therfore such as do passe those plaines use to observe the starres in the night as thei do that sayle the seas, and by the course of them direct their journey. The nightes for the more parte be brighter than the dayes, wherfore in the daye time the countrey is wild and unpassible, when they can neither finde any tracte

* Bactria is said to be a corruption of Bakhtiar, an old Persian word signifying 'The East,' just as the meaning of Khorassan is 'The Region of the Sun.'

nor waye to go in, nor marke or signe wherby to passe, the starres beying hidden by the miste. If the same winde chaunce to come durying the time that men be passying, it overwhelmeth them with sande. Where the countrey is temperate, it bringeth forth great plenty both of men and horse, so that the Bactrians may make 30,000 horsemen.'

Sir Alexander Burnes bears testimony to the perfect fidelity of this picture even at the present day, especially as regards the desert to the north-west and the mode of travelling therein. In addition to Bactra or Zariaspa, mention is made of a town called Darapsa, Adraspa, or Drapsaca, the first place taken by Alexander after crossing the mountains. 'The Bactrians,' says Archdeacon Williams, 'held a middle place between the Persians and Scythians, partaking more of the polished manners of the former than of the rudeness of the latter.' They were, nevertheless, accused of throwing out the bodies of their dying relatives into the streets to be devoured by dogs, thence called 'entombers,' or 'buriers of the dead'—a practice that was abolished by Alexander. Professor Wilson, however, was disposed to trace this legend to the Zoroastrian custom of exposing dead bodies in the Towers of Silence, to the ordinary process of decomposition accelerated by the foul birds of prey.

In Grecian dramatic poetry this region was the scene of the wanderings of Bacchus. The pages of historic romance tell how Ninus sat down before Bactra with an immense army, and only succeeded when reinforced by Semiramis. In the reign of Sardanapalus the Bactrians broke out into a formidable revolt, but in that of Arbaces they largely contributed to the reduction of Nineveh. Against the great Cyrus they waged equal war, until his union with the daughter of Astyages, when they freely tendered their submission. In the army of Xerxes, as we have seen, they were arrayed beside the Sacæ and the Caspii, and are represented as wearing a sort of Median head-

dress, and as being armed with bows and arrows, and short spears. Their cavalry were at all times highly esteemed, and honourably distinguished themselves in the last days of the Persian Empire.

The Sogdiani, like the Bactrians, were accused of handing over to canine 'entombers' the mortal remains of their friends and kinsfolk, and probably under the same circumstances. Their country extended from the Oxus to the Jaxartes, which divided them from the Massagetæ, who occupied the vast steppe extending to the Altai Mountains. Their most valued river was that called by the Greeks Polytimetus, the 'Very Precious' or 'Much Honoured,' now known as the Zarafshan, or 'gold-scattering' river of Samarkand, which flows past Bokhara, and is finally lost in the Denghiz or Karakul Lake, to the S. S. E. of the latter city. In those days this productive region appears to have been overgrown with forests abounding in wild beasts and in game of all kinds. At Bazaria, for instance—perhaps the modern Bokhara—we read of a royal park, or 'paradise,' that had not been disturbed for four generations, in which 4000 animals were slain by Alexander and his officers. Here, it is said, Alexander overcame a lion in single fight, extorting from the Spartan envoy, who witnessed the rash deed, the hearty exclamation: 'Bravo, Alexander! well hast thou won the prize of royalty from the king of the woods.' The principal city was Maracanda, though the names of several other towns are preserved, such as Cyropolis, Ghaza, Marginia, Nautaka (near Karshi), Alexandreia Ultima (near Khojend), and Oxiana. In Maracanda, however, stood the palace of the Sogdian ruler, and it was here that Alexander murdered his own foster-brother, Clitus. The *loca deserta Sogdianorum* seem to have been no less terrible than those of the Bactriani, judging from the experiences of the flying column commanded by Alexander in person. John Brende shall again be our interpreter:—

'In the wante of water (that hath bene declared before) desperation moved them to thirst before they had desire to drinke. For by the space of 1111 C furlonges they founde no water at all. The vapoure of the Sunne, beynge in the somner season, did so burne the sande that when it began to waxe hote it starrhed all thinges as it had bene with a continuall fire. And then the lyght somewhat obscured by a mist that rose out of the arth by the immoderate heate, caused the playnes to haue appearaunce of a maine Sea. Their iourney in the nyght seamed tollerable, because their bodyes were somewhat refreshed with the dewe and the coolde of the mornynge. But when the daye came and the heate rose, then the drought driying up all ye natural humoures, both their mouthes and their bowels were enflamed for heate. Then their hartes failed and their bodies fainted, beynge in case that thei could neither stand styl, nor passe forwardes. A few that were taught by suche as knew the countrey, had gotten water whiche refreshed them somewhat, but as the heate encreased, so their desire grewe againe to drinke.'

After subduing Seistan and Afghanistan without much difficulty except such as arose from the severity of the climate, Alexander appears to have crossed over into Bactria by the Khawak Pass, at an altitude of 13,200 feet above the sea, towards the close of the winter 330—329 B. C. The passage over the mountains occupied the best part of a fortnight, nor was it until the fifteenth day that his starved and exhausted army came in sight of Adraspa. Bactria was speedily overrun, but terrible sufferings were endured in traversing the burning and waterless desert that approaches almost to the very bank of the Oxus. As all the boats within a considerable distance had been destroyed by Bessus, the river was crossed by means of inflated skins, and shortly afterwards the murderer of Darius was overtaken and captured by Ptolemy. Stript naked,

loaded with chains, and his neck encircled by an iron collar, the traitor was placed in a conspicuous position, and exposed to the scorn and derision of the entire army as it defiled past him. He was then scourged and sent to Bactria, whence he was subsequently conveyed into Persia and delivered into the hands of the mother of Darius. By her orders, according to Plutarch, four trees were bent down by main force, to each of which he was attached by a limb. Suddenly the trees were released, and springing back to their natural positions tore the wretched man into shapeless fragments.*

From the Oxus Alexander marched straight on to Maracanda, or near the site of the modern Samarkand. No very serious resistance was offered by the Sogdians, though the Macedonian detachments were much harassed by desultory attacks. The most difficult operations were the reduction of Cyropolis on the Jaxartes, and the storming of an almost inaccessible rock where Alexander himself was severely wounded by an arrow. Within the space of three weeks the town of Alexandreia Ultima was built at no great distance from Khojend, to mark the limit of the Macedonian conquests in that direction. The Jaxartes also was crossed, and an idle victory gained over the nomad Scythians, in which bootless expedition his soldiers suffered greatly from thirst, and the king himself was attacked with illness. A Macedonian brigade having in the mean while been cut to pieces in Sogdiana by Spitamenes, Alexander overran the fertile valley of the Polytimetus—the Kohik, or Zarafshan, of later times—and put to the sword all who came within reach of his vengeance. He then re-crossed the Oxus and wintered at Zariaspa, another name for Bactra or Balkh.

The submission of the Sogdians, however, proved to be

* By other writers, however, Bessus is said to have been nailed to a cross and pierced with arrows, at Ecbatana.

merely nominal, for no sooner had he quitted their territory than they broke out into open revolt. The greater part of the following year—B. C. 328—was consequently spent in repeating the work of the preceding one, and it was now that occurred the slaughter of the wild animals in the Royal Chace of Bazaria. This year, too, was marked by that horrible debauch at Maracanda, at which Alexander slew with his own hand his foster-brother Clitus, who had saved his life at the Battle of the Granicus by cutting off with one sweep of his sword the up-raised arm of Spithridates. During the early part of the winter of 328 B. C. the Macedonian army rested from its labours at Nautaka. The next feat of arms, in the spring of B. C. 327, was the reduction of the well-nigh impregnable fort which Archdeacon Williams places in Bactria, while Bishop Thirlwall alights upon it in Sogdiana, and whose chief peril to the conqueror lay in the beauty of Roxana, daughter of the Bactrian chief Oxyartes, 'said to have been, with the exception of the wife of Darius, the loveliest woman seen by the Macedonians during their Asiatic expedition.'

The spring was spent chiefly at Bactria, where Alexander united himself in marriage to Roxana, greatly to the disgust of his Greek soldiery. The intoxicating influences of love, wine, and success without a check, here impelled the king to excesses bordering upon madness. Callisthenes, the nephew of Aristotle, a somewhat impracticable republican—or 'philosopher,' as he would have preferred to be called—having ostentatiously refused to adopt the Persian mode of prostration, inevitably incurred the displeasure of Alexander, too little used to opposition to make allowances for the feelings of others. About the same time Hermolaus, one of the royal pages, presumed to transfix with a javelin a wild boar that had turned upon the king, and for his officious loyalty was deprived of his horse and scourged. Thirsting for revenge, Hermolaus conspired with some of his

brother pages, all of them youths of the best families of Greece, to slay Alexander when he retired to rest. The king, however, escaped that danger by sitting up all night carousing, and on the morrow one of the conspirators, as usual in such cases, betrayed his accomplices. Hermolaus and his friends were put to the torture, but nobly refused to implicate others in their guilt, and were stoned to death. As the intimate friend of Hermolaus, Callisthenes also was subjected to torture, and afterwards hanged, though no proof had been obtained of his complicity.

In the summer of 327 B. C. Alexander again crossed the mountains, taking with him 30,000 recruits from Bactria and Sogdiana, and marched to the conquest of the Punjab, leaving Amyntas at Bactra with a reserve of 10,000 foot, and 3,500 horse. In Sogdiana he had built eight towns, each of which was a fortified post, but his power over that province was confined to the immediate vicinity of those garrisons. The moral effects of his conquests, however, were more extensive and durable, and have been thus succinctly summed up:—'Those nations had not been civilized, had they not been vanquished by Alexander. He taught marriage to the Hyrcanians, and agriculture to the Arachosii; he instructed the Sogdians to maintain, and not to kill, their parents; the Persians to respect, and not to marry, their mothers; the Scythians to bury, and not to eat, their dead.'

The name of the great Sikunder is still revered in the distant East, and the chiefs of the petty principalities to the north of the Hindoo Koosh affect to claim descent from the Macedonian conqueror, while the people of Kafiristan pride themselves on the exploits of their Grecian ancestors—though, apparently, with little reason. A title commonly bestowed upon Alexander by Arab writers is that of Sikunder Zulkarnain, or Dhulkarnain, that is, the two-horned, in allusion to his pretensions as the son of Jupiter Ammon, represented on his coins by the ram's horns

affixed to his head. Colonel Yule hence derives the origin of the old English word 'dulcarnon,' synonymous with dilemma, and which is still used, he says, in that sense in some parts of England. In Chaucer's poem of 'Troylus and Cresside,' it occurs in the following passage:

> 'But whether that ye dwell, or for him go,
> I am till God me better minde sende,
> At dulcarnon, right at my wittes end.'

The era of the Seleucidæ is also called by the Arab historians the Taarish-dhulkarnain, but less with reference to Alexander's horns than to the strength of Seleucus Nicator, of whom it was alleged that he could stop a bull in full career by seizing him by the horns.

On the death of Alexander, B. C. 321, Parthia and Hyrcania fell to Phrataphernes, Bactria and Sogdiana to Philip, but by the year 305 B. C. Seleucus had brought beneath his sway, Media, Assyria, Persia, Hyrcania, Bactria, and all the country eastward as far as the Indus. Some sixty years later, or B. C. 256, the Greco-Bactrian kingdom was established, which flourished for nearly one hundred years, until it was overthrown by an irruption of the Scythians, who were, in their turn, expelled by the Parthians, and finally settled in a district called after them, Sacasténé by the Greeks and Sakasthan by the Indians, and which corresponds with the Drangiana of Alexander's time, and the Seistan of our own.

The Parthian kingdom was virtually founded by Arsaces about the same time that Theodotus achieved the independence of Bactriana, though it was not recognized by Antiochus the Great until about 208 B. C. The dynasty of Arsaces maintained their position for nearly 480 years. Mithridates, the sixth monarch of that race, ruled from the Euphrates to the Indus; while Orodes, the eleventh king, destroyed Crassus and his

legions.* But the thirtieth sovereign, Artabenes IV., became involved in war with the Roman emperor Macrinus, and was so crippled in his resources that, A. D. 226, he was defeated, taken prisoner, and put to death by a Persian chief named Ardesheer (Artaxerxes), whose descendants were called Sassanides from his immediate ancestor Sassan, fabled to be the son of Isfundear (Xerxes) the son of Gushtasp (Darius Hystaspes). This successful adventurer revived the Magian religion, and terminated the glories of the Parthian name. He was also the first to assume the title of Shah-in-Shah, or King of kings, a titular distinction claimed by his successors on the throne of Persia down to our own times.

Before proceeding to briefly sketch the chief incidents belonging to the history of the Sassanides so far as it is connected with that of Central Asia, it may be worth while to say a few words in explanation of the Scythian irruption which so abruptly terminated the existence of the Greco-Bactrian kingdom. According to Colonel Yule, about the middle of the 2nd century before the Christian era, the Hiongnu Scythians, dwelling on the northern frontier of China, dispossessed of their lands the Yuechi, a Tibetan race lying a little to the south-west. The latter migrated to the Ili, and dislodged the Sze; but a few years later the Usoon were also driven by the Hiongnu to the banks of the Ili, and both the Yuechi and the Sze were hurled, as it were, upon Sogdiana, whence they overflowed to the foot of the Afghan mountains, which, indeed, they finally crossed in their onward progress. From that date the whole of Central Asia, as that phrase is under-

* 'The frontier,' says Sir John Malcolm, 'which the kingdom of Parthia presented to the Roman Empire, extended from the Caspian Sea to the Persian Gulf. It consists of lofty and barren mountains, of rapid and broad streams, and of wide-spreading deserts. In whatever direction the legions of Rome advanced, the country was laid waste.'

stood in common parlance, remained for several centuries under Scytho-Chinese domination, until Khosroo Nousheerwan overran Transoxiana to the remote mountainous parts of Ferghana or Khokan.

Towards the latter part of the 6th century the Tou-Kioue or Toorks supplanted the Chinese, better known as the Haiathalah (Ephthalites, or White Huns), who became broken up into twenty-seven small States recognizing the supremacy of the Toorkish Khakan.

To this group of *quasi*-independent principalities Hiouen Stsang gave the collective name of Tou-ho-lo, or Tokhara, which survived in the Mohammedan Tokharistan as late as the 13th century. Under the Haiathalah the religion of Zoroaster had given way to that of Buddha, and the celebrated Buddhist Pilgrim just named mentions colossal images and convents at Termedh, Khulm, Balkh, and Bamian.*

The Sassanian dynasty commenced A.D. 226 with Ardesheer Babigan—that is, the son of Babec,—whose son and successor Shahpoor, the Sapor of Greek historians, took prisoner the Emperor Valerian, and founded the city of Nishapoor in Khorassan near the famous Turquoise mines. The descendants of this monarch figure largely in the annals of the Byzantine Empire, though under names slightly corrupted, as Hormisdas for Hormuz, Varanes for Baharam, Isdigertes for Yezdijerd, Peroses for Feroze, and Cabades for Kobad. In the reign of the third Hormuz the region comprised between the Oxus and the Jaxartes, between the Caspian Sea and China, changed its old name

* The Toorks are said to be descended from the Hiongnu, or Huns, whose aggressiveness towards their less turbulent neighbours caused the overthrow of the Greco-Bactrian kingdom. They have been described as a round-headed, flat-nosed people, with long, narrow, oblique eyes, prominent cheekbones, thick lips, huge ears, and very white and sound teeth: in other words, as exhibiting the Mongolian type of features.

of Turan for that of Toorkestan. The former appellation is derived by Persian romance-writers from Toor the son of Feridoon, a prince of the mythical Peishdadian dynasty which commenced with Kaiomurs, Noah's grandson, who held his court at Balkh.

The sixteenth monarch of the Sassanian line, Feroze or Peroses, twice waged war upon the Toorks by whose assistance he had dethroned and murdered his elder brother Hormuz. In his first campaign he lost his army in the desert into which it had been led by the patriotic treachery of a Toorkish chief, who had imitated, no doubt unconsciously, the example of Zopyrus. Feroze was permitted to return to his own territories on pledging his royal word to live in peace for the future with his magnanimous neighbour. He proved false, however, to his plighted honour, and shortly afterwards re-crossed the Oxus with a formidable army. On this occasion the Toorks anticipated the stratagem employed by Bruce at Bannockburn, and in their rear excavated a broad deep trench, concealed beneath grass and shrubs, with a few pathways of solid earth left as bridges. Across these the Toorks fled in seeming panic on the approach of the Persians, who rushed forward, as they supposed, to an assured victory and were precipitated into the trench, where Feroze and many thousands of his troops were easily slaughtered.

His son Kobad became a disciple of the false prophet Mazdak, who preached community of wives and property, and the most advanced socialistic doctrines. For this he was deposed by his nobles and thrown into prison, but, escaping to the Toorks, was by them replaced on the throne. Kobad, or Cabades, subsequently waged successful war against the Emperor Anastasius, and built the town of Gunjah in Georgia, now a Russian fort. 'What a change,' Sir John Malcolm exclaims, 'has the lapse of some centuries produced. The Empire of Persia,

the great rival of the Romans, now appears unable to resist the tide of civilization and of conquest which comes on her, not from the fountain of early knowledge, the East, or the learned West, but from the frozen regions of the North; from a land unknown to her historians, long inhabited by wretched and savage tribes of ignorant barbarians, who,—from a combination of powerful causes, the genius of some of their sovereigns, the example of Southern Europe, and the influence of a religion which has everywhere improved the condition of mankind,—have overcome all those natural obstacles which opposed their rise, and started, as by magic, into great and imperial power.'

Kobad's son, the great Nousheerwan, effectually stopped the spread of socialism by sending its apostle, Mazdak, to execution, and by dealing very summarily with his followers. This prince was impressed with the value of learning, and afforded generous encouragement to men of letters. In his reign Pilpay's Fables were first translated into the Persian language, through which they became known to the nations of Europe. In his wars with Justinian, Nousheerwan gained considerable successes until the genius of Belisarius turned the tide of victory. The whole of Transoxiana was annexed to Persia, and order prevailed to the extreme frontiers of Bokhara. Few despots have exhibited a nobler disposition than this illustrious monarch, and it is written that Mohammed pronounced himself fortunate in being born in the reign of so just a prince.

Under his son Hormuz III. the Toorks endeavoured to recover their independence, and even invaded the Persian territories, but were signally overthrown, and their Khakhan, being taken prisoner, was deprived of sight and then strangled by the bowstring.

The next king of this line, Khosroo Purveez,—the Chosroes of the Greeks,—underwent both extremes of fortune. He commenced his reign by expelling the usurper Baharam-Choubeen

and chasing him across the Oxus. His next exploit was the capture of Jerusalem, after which he gave himself up to luxury and ostentation. Mohammed, his grandfather's admirer, addressed to him a letter bidding him renounce his false religion and become a convert to Islam. This strange missive Khosroo contemptuously tore up, and flung the fragments into the Karasu. He acted with less spirit, however, in his contest with Heraclius, taking at last to ignominious flight. His end was miserable. He was cast into prison and murdered by the orders of his own son, Shiroueh, or Siroes, A.D. 628.

After the death of Khosroo the throne of Persia was occupied by a rapid succession of weak rulers, under whom general misrule prevailed throughout the land. The choice of the nobles at last fell upon Yezdijerd, who is supposed to have been a grandson of Khosroo Purveez, but who was simply a puppet in their hands. He was the last of the Sassanides. In his reign the flood of Arab conquest swept alike over the mountains of Persia and the deserts and oases of Central Asia. The province of Khorassan was promised by Khalif Othman to whomsoever should bring it under the true faith. In the sonorous phraseology of Gibbon, 'the condition was accepted; the prize was deserved; the standard of Mohammed was planted on the walls of Herat, Merou, and Balch; and the successful leader neither halted nor reposed till his foaming cavalry had tasted the waters of the Oxus.'

The unhappy Yezdijerd fled after the decisive battle of Cadesia to Ferghana, where sympathy was expressed for misfortunes that betokened a common danger. 'The king of Samarcand, with the Turkish tribes of Sogdiana and Scythia, were moved by the lamentations and promises of the fallen monarch; and he solicited, by a suppliant embassy, the more solid and powerful friendship of the Emperor of China. The virtuous Taitsong, the first of the dynasty of Tang, may be justly com-

pared with the Antonines of Rome: his people enjoyed the blessings of prosperity and peace; and his dominion was acknowledged by forty-four hordes of the barbarians of Tartary. His last garrisons of Cashgar and Khoten maintained a frequent intercourse with their neighbours of the Jaxartes and Oxus; a recent colony of Persians had introduced into China the astronomy of the Magi; and Taitsong might be alarmed by the rapid progress and dangerous vicinity of the Arabs.'

Yezdijerd, however, was too impatient to await the arrival of his Chinese auxiliaries, and retraced his steps to Merv at the head of a tumultuous body of Toorks. It is not an easy task to unravel the confused accounts that have reached us of the tragic events that followed. It is only apparent that the last of the Sassanides was compelled to flee for his life from his own barbarous allies; and was put to death, while he slept, by a miller, for the sake of his armour. His body was flung into the mill dam, whence it was extracted a few days later by the penitent citizens of Merv, and sent to Istakhar to be interred in the royal burying-place, while the covetous miller underwent the fate he had inflicted upon his unconscious and confiding victim. The Magian religion was now extinguished throughout Persia, where it had flourished for twelve centuries, and is now preserved only in the wealthy community of the Parsees, and in a few scattered districts of the ancient Iran.

Feroze, the son of Yezdijerd, was content to lead a life of inglorious security as Captain of the body-guard of the Emperor of China; and his son, also, after a faint and fruitless attempt to recover his hereditary dominions, ended his days as a pensioner of that court. Yezdijerd's two daughters married, the one Hassan, the son of Ali, Mohammed's son-in-law, and the other Mohammed, the son of Aboubekr, the father of Ayesha, while the daughter of Feroze became the wife of the Khalif

Walid, and thus 'the race of the caliphs and imams was ennobled by the blood of their royal mothers.'

The Sassanian dynasty reigned over Persia for 415 years, but their power extended beyond the Oxus under the ablest princes of the race, and Sir John Malcolm asserts that 'their memory is still cherished by a nation whose ancient glory is associated with the names of Ardisheer, Shahpoor, and Nousheerwan.' Be that as it may, although the final victory of the Arabs was achieved at Nehavund, A.D. 651, or in the year of the Hijra 28, it was not until A.D. 706 that Transoxiana, or, as it then came to be called, Mawaralnahr, was finally subdued by Walid's lieutenant Kotaiba Ibn Moslem, or Catibah, 'the camel-driver,' who imposed upon the infidels a tribute of two millions of pieces of gold, broke or burnt their idols, delivered a sermon in the mosque of Khwarezm or Khiva, drove the Toorkish hordes to the desert, and overawed the Chinese.

'To their (the victorious Arabs) industry, the prosperity of the province, the Sogdiana of the ancients, may in a great measure be ascribed, but the advantages of the soil and climate had been understood and cultivated since the reign of the Macedonian kings. Before the invasion of the Saracens, Carizme, Bochara, and Samarcand were rich and populous under the yoke of the shepherds of the North. These cities were surrounded with a double wall; and the exterior fortification, of a larger circumference, enclosed the fields and gardens of the adjacent district. The mutual wants of India and Europe were supplied by the diligence of the Sogdian merchants, and the inestimable art of transforming linen into paper has been diffused from the manufacture of Samarcand over the western world.'

There is, doubtless, some degree of truth in this ornate picture, but it is strange that so keen a critic as Gibbon did not see in the necessity of an 'exterior fortification' irresistible

evidence of the unsettled state of the country, and of the general insecurity of life and property. That double line of circumvallation has been noticed by modern travellers, but no one has ventured to cite the fact as a proof of order and prosperity. The manufacture of linen paper, it may be added, was not introduced into Samarkand from China until the middle of the seventh century, or about twenty-five years before Saad, the Mussulman Governor of Khorassan, made his entry into that city, and it had long before been in use among the Persians. The 'shepherds of the north' were not likely to place a high value upon the possession of an 'inestimable art,' which had nothing to do with the rearing of sheep or horses. It was certainly through the Arabs that paper made from linen first found its way into Europe from the far East.

At the same time it sufficiently appears from Colonel Yule's exceedingly interesting book on 'Cathay and the Way Thither,' that in the sixth century the Toorkish Court had attained to a high degree of semi-barbarous magnificence. That learned and accomplished geographer quotes a fragment of Menander Protector, in which it is related how the Toorks sent an embassy to the Emperor Justinian at Byzantium. The Sogdians had previously prevailed upon Dizabulus, the great Khan of the Toorks, who had won their country from the Ephthalites or White Huns, to endeavour to obtain permission from Nousheerwan, King of Persia, to carry their silken goods into his territories, as to a new market. That monarch, however, was advised by his counsellors that 'it would be highly inexpedient for the Persians to enter into friendly relations with the Turks, for the whole race of the Scythians was not to be trusted.' Poison was consequently administered to the unfortunate envoys, and in most instances with fatal effect, 'whilst the king caused it to be whispered about among the Persians that the Turkish ambassadors had died of the suffocating dry heat of the Persian

climate; for their own country was subject to frequent falls of snow, and they could not exist except in a cold climate.' The Khan was not deceived, but was compelled to dissemble his indignation, and to content himself with despatching to Byzantium the chief man among the Sogdians, named Maniach, in company with an envoy from his own court, in order to 'cultivate the friendship of the Romans, and to transfer the sale of silk to them, seeing also that they consumed it more largely than any other people. . . And thus it was that the nation of the Turks became friends with the Romans.'

These friendly overtures were well received, and a return embassy under Zemarchus was despatched by the Emperor Justinian to the Toorks, 'who were anciently called Sacæ.' On the arrival of the Byzantine ambassadors in Sogdiana, they were presented with some specimens of iron from the Sogdian mines, which they appear to have regarded as a piece of brag on the part of the barbarians. Colonel Yule, however, suggests that they were simply presented with the bar, or lump, of iron, annually forged by the Toorks in memory of their original settlement on the Altai Mountains, where they worked as smiths and armourers in the service of the Khan of the Geugen. Zemarchus, his suite and baggage, were then purified from all evil intents by passing between two fires, and at last reached the camp of Dizabulus pitched in a valley beyond the Jaxartes, perhaps at Ming Bulak, or, the Thousand Springs; though Sir Henry Rawlinson is probably more correct in placing the Khakhan's encampment at the foot of the Ak-tagh, or White Mountains, to the north of Samarkand.

The envoys were at once conducted to the Khakhan's tent, in which they found him 'seated on a golden chair with two wheels, which could be drawn by one horse when required.' The audience being over, they were invited to a feast, and spent the rest of the day convivially, in a tent that 'was

furnished with silken hangings of various colours artfully wrought. They were supplied with wine, not pressed from the grape like ours, for their country does not produce the vine, nor is it customary among them to use grape wine, but what they got to drink was some other kind of barbarian liquor. . . Next day again they assembled in another pavilion, adorned in like manner with rich hangings of silk, in which figures of different kinds were wrought. Dizabulus was seated on a couch that was all of gold, and in the middle of the pavilion were drinking vessels, and flagons, and great jars, all of gold. So they engaged in another drinking match, talking and listening to such purpose as people do in their drink, and then separated. The following day there was another bout in a pavilion supported by wooden posts covered with gold, and in which there was a gilded throne resting on four golden peacocks. In front of the place of meeting there was a great array of waggons in which there was a huge quantity of silver articles, consisting of plates and dishes, besides numerous figures of animals in silver, in no respect inferior to our own. To such a pitch has attained the luxury of the Toorkish sovereign.'

To foreign artisans, however, rather than to his own may be fairly attributable the beauty of his 'silver articles,' the spoils of plundered cities. On their homeward journey, Justinian's envoys are said to have reached 'the Oech,' or Oxus, and then 'the great and wide lagoon,' evidently the Aral. Crossing the Ust Urt they at last came to the Volga, and finally took ship at Trapezus, or Trebizond, for Byzantium. Sir Henry Rawlinson, it may be remarked, maintains that Zemarchus passed over the bed of the Aral, without being aware that it was a sea, and is of opinion that the ambassador took nearly a bee line from the Toorkish encampment to the Volga. But in that case, how came he to sight the Oech, or Oxus?

CHAPTER III.

MAWARALNAHR IN THE 10TH CENTURY — BOKHARA — SAMARKAND — KHWAREZM—THE GHUZ—IBN MOHALHAL'S TRAVELS—THE SAMANIDES—THE GHUZNEEVIDES—THE SELJOOK DYNASTY—ALP ARSLAN—MALEK SHAH—SANJAR—KINGDOM OF KHWAREZM—CONQUEST OF MAWARALNAHR BY THE MOGHULS—JELAL-OOD-DEEN.

ALTHOUGH the Moslem supremacy was established by Kotaiba over the whole of Mawaralnahr, or the region 'beyond the river' (Oxus), in the first decade of the eighth century, the small Chinese States grouped together as Tokhara, or Tokharistan, continued for many years afterwards to send envoys to Singanfu in token of their faithful allegiance, and it was not until A. D. 760 that tribute was paid to the Khalif by the petty principalities in the valleys of the upper Oxus.

The condition of Mawaralnahr in the tenth century is depicted by the Arab traveller Ibn Haukal—as translated by Sir William Ouseley—in the most glowing colours. The inhabitants are represented as 'people of probity and virtue, averse from evil and fond of peace.' Such was the productiveness of the soil that every year enough corn was laid up to compensate for deficient harvests in 'the other regions.'

'Every kind of fruit and meat,' writes the enthusiastic wanderer, 'abounds there; and the water is most delicious. The cattle are excellent; the sheep from Turkestan, Ghaznien, and Samarcand, are highly esteemed in all places. Maweralnahr affords raw silk, wool, and (goats') hair in great quantities. Its

mines yield silver and tin, or lead, abundantly; and they are better than the other mines, except those of silver at Penjhir; but Maweralnahr affords the best copper and quicksilver, and other similar productions of mines; and the mines of sal ammoniac (used in tinning and soldering) in all Khorasan (*sic*) are there. Like the paper made at Samarcand, there is not any to be found elsewhere. So abundant are the fruits of Soghd and Astersheineh and Ferghanah and Chaje (or Shash) that they are given to the cattle as food. Musk is brought from Tibbet, and sent to all parts. Fox-skins, sable, and ermine-skins, are all to be found at the bazaars of Maweralnahr. Such is the generosity and liberality of the inhabitants, that no one turns aside from the rites of hospitality; so that a person contemplating them in this light would imagine that all the families in the land were but one house . . . You cannot see any town, or stage, or even desert, in Maweralnahr, without a convenient inn, or stage-house, for the accommodation of travellers, with everything necessary. I have heard that there are above 2000 *robats*, or inns, in Mawaralnahr, where as many persons as may arrive shall find sufficient forage for their beasts and meat for themselves.'

Ibn Haukal mentions also a palace in the valley of Soghd, the doors of which were fastened back to the wall with nails, and had been so for upwards of a hundred years, to allow strangers to enter at all hours of the day or night. He had heard, too, he says, that in Mawaralnahr there were 300,000 Kulabs, each furnishing one horse and one foot soldier, 'and the absence of these men when they go forth is not felt, or is not perceptible, in the country.' And though the people were so well-to-do, many farmers possessing from one to five hundred head of cattle, they were remarkable for their docility and orderly conduct. 'At all time the Turk soldiers had the precedence of every other race, and the Khalifs always chose them on account

of their excellent services, their obedient disposition, their bravery, and their fidelity.'

'In all the regions of the earth,' continues our traveller, 'there is not a more flourishing or a more delightful country than this, especially the district of Bokhara. If a person stand on the Kohendiz (or ancient castle) of Bokhara, and cast his eyes around, he shall not see anything but beautiful green and luxuriant verdure on every side of the country; so that he would imagine the green of the earth and the azure of the heavens were united: and as there are green fields in every quarter, so there are villas interspersed among the green fields. And in all Khorasan and Maweralnahr there are not any people more long-lived than those of Bokhara. It is said that in all the world there is not any place more delightful (or salubrious) than these three: one, the Soghd of Samarcand; another, the Rud Aileh; and the third, the Ghouteh of Damascus.'

For his part, Ibn Haukal gives the preference to the first of the three, which 'for eight days' journey is all delightful country, affording fine prospects, and full of gardens, and orchards, and villages, corn-fields, and villas, and running streams, reservoirs and fountains, both on the right hand and on the left. You pass from corn-fields into rich meadows and pasture lands; and the Soghd is far more healthy than the Rud Aileh, or the Ghouteh of Dameshk; and the fruits of Soghd are the finest in the world. Among the hills and palaces flow running streams, gliding between the trees. In Ferghanah and Chaje (or Shash), in the mountains between Ferghanah and Turkestan, there are all kinds of fruits and herbs and flowers, and various species of the violet; all these it is lawful for any one who passes by, to pull and gather. In Siroushteh there are flowers of an uncommon species.'

Descending to details, Ibn Haukal informs us that 'Bokhara is called Bounheket: it is situated on a plain; the houses are of

wood, and it abounds in villas and gardens and orchards; and the villages are as close to one another as the groves and gardens, extending for near 12 farsang by 12 farsang: all about this space is a wall, and within it the people dwell winter and summer; and there is not to be seen one spot uncultivated, or in decay. Outside this there is another wall, with a small town and a castle, in which the Samanian family, who were governors of Khorasan, resided. This kohendiz, or castle, has ramparts, a mosque, and bazaar. In all Maweralnahr, or Khorasan, there is not any place more populous and flourishing than Bokhara. The river of Soghd runs through the midst of it, and passes on to the mills and meadows, and the borders of Beikend: and much of it falls into a pond, or pool, near Beikend, at a place called Sam Kous.'

In the inner wall there were seven gates, in the outer twelve. In all directions flowed canals of irrigation derived from the main stream, on one of which were situated 'near 2000 villas and gardens, exclusive of corn-fields and meadows.' 'There is not any hill or desert; all is laid out in castles, villas, gardens, cornfields, and orchards. The wood which they use for fuel is brought from their gardens, and they burn also reeds and rushes. The grounds of Bokhara and of Soghd are all in the vicinity of water; whence it happens that their trees do not arrive at any considerable height; but the fruits of Bokhara are more excellent than the fruits of any part of Mawaralnahr.' There was a saying that never had the coffin, or bier, of a prince been brought out of the kohendiz of Bokhara, and that no one who was once confined within those walls was ever seen again.

Scarcely less ecstatic is Ibn Haukal's description of Samarkand, situated on the south side of the Kohik or Zarafshan. It boasted of a castle, of spacious suburbs, and of extensive fortifications, pierced for four gates. The city was surrounded with a deep ditch, and rivulets of water flowed through the streets

and bazaars. 'There are many villas and orchards, and very few of the palaces are without gardens, so that if a person should go to the kohendiz, and from that look around, he would find that the villas and palaces were covered, as it were, with trees; and even the streets and shops and banks of the streams are all planted with trees. . . The houses of Samarkand are made of clay and wood: the inhabitants are remarkable for their beauty: they are gentle and polite in their manner, and of amiable dispositions.'

According to local tradition, a nephew of the king of Yemen, named Samar, had besieged for a whole year a castle on the Jyhoon, but seemed as far off as ever from success. It chanced, however, that the custodian of one of the gates was one day made prisoner, and brought before the prince. In reply to the questions put to him, this man stated that the king was nearly always in a state of helpless inebriety, and that the government was administered by his daughter. Thereupon Samar sent him back to the princess, the bearer of a golden casket filled with gems, and of a letter in which he offered her marriage, and in proof of his sincerity promised to present her beforehand with 4000 chests full of gold. The princess accordingly agreed to open one of the gates, through which defiled one thousand donkeys, with a heavy chest slung on either side, and each driven by a man rudely but sufficiently armed. In each chest, however, instead of gold, two armed men were concealed, and at a given signal, all these descended from their hiding-places and set upon the unsuspicious garrison, making, besides, a hideous uproar with the bells with which they had been sagaciously provided. The place was speedily taken, the king slain, and the princess reduced to captivity. The castle was destroyed, and a city built upon the site, called by Samar after his own name, Samarkand, or Samar's town. It may be here

parenthetically mentioned that the post-fix 'kend,' 'kund,' or 'kanda' signifies 'a town,' as Tashkend, or 'Stonetown.'

Ibn Haukal has also a good word to say for Khiva. 'Khwarezm,' he writes, 'is a town well supplied with provisions, and abounding in fruits. . . Linen and wool are manufactured there, and also brocade. The inhabitants are people of high reputation and polished manners: the men of Khwarezm are great travellers; there is not any town in Khorasan without a colony of them. The lower parts of the land of Ghuz belong to Khwarezm; the inhabitants are active and hardy. The wealth of Khwarezm is derived from its commerce and merchandise. They have carpets of Siklab and of Khozr, and they bring to Khwarezm from Khozr the skins of foxes and martins, sables and ermines.'

Ibn Mohalhal, a contemporary of Ibn Haukal, also makes mention of the Ghuz, 'whose city is of stone, timber, and reeds. They have,' he continues, 'a temple, but no images. Their king is very powerful, and trades with India and China. Their clothes are of linen and camels' hair. They have no wool. They have a white stone, which is good for colic, and a red stone which, by touching a sword, prevents it from cutting. The route lay securely for one month through this country,' which Colonel Yule places to the east of the Sea of Aral; and he adds that, in the reign of Constantine Ducas, the Ghuz, or Uz, penetrated into Macedonia, and received large sums of money from that emperor to induce them to retire. On their way home they were cut to pieces by the Pechinegs, called the Bajnak by Ibn Mohalhal, and described as 'a people with beards and moustachios.' The Pechinegs were much dreaded by Constantine Porphyrogenitus, in whose reign they were encamped on the Dnieper and the Dniester, having been driven from their previous settlements on the Volga and the Yaek, or Ural, by the

very Ghuz upon whom they now wreaked such terrible vengeance, and who were actually Toorkomans.

This Aboo Doolif Misr Ibn Mohalhal, says Colonel Yule, was at the Court of Nasri or Nusser Bin Ahmed Bin Ismail, the third of the Samanides, and was present at the audience accorded to the ambassadors who were sent from China to Bokhara to offer the hand of a Chinese Princess to Nasri's son and successor, Ameer Noah. Ibn Mohalhal accompanied the embassy on its return to China about the middle of the 10th century, and wrote a narrative of his travels, which may still be consulted with interest and advantage.

After quitting the territory of the Ghuz, he came to that of the Taghazghaz, a powerful Toorkee tribe occupying the district afterwards known as Uigur, who eat flesh both raw and cooked, and wore woollen and cotton garments. No temples were seen in this land, the inhabitants of which paid great attention to their horses. They had a stone which had the virtue of stopping bleeding at the nose. When a rainbow appeared, they held high festival—rejoicing, no doubt, in any sign of moisture. In praying, they turned to the west. Their standards were black. On the summit of the king's castle was erected a round structure, gilded all over, and large enough to contain a hundred men. To traverse this country was the work of twenty days, during which travellers went in fear of their lives.

Next to the Taghazghaz where the Khirkiz, who possessed temples and retained so much of the Magian superstitions that they never willingly extinguished a light. In prayer they looked to the south, and are described as worshipping the planets Saturn and Venus, and as prophesying by Mars. Musk in small quantities was procurable, but the most remarkable product of the country was a stone that shone in the dark, and was consequently used as a lamp. The Khirkiz kept three festivals in the year; their standards were of a green colour;

and their civilization so far advanced that they were possessed of a written character. So great was their veneration for royalty, that no one under forty years of age was permitted to sit down in the king's presence.

The nearest neighbours of the Khirkiz on the other side were the Hazlakh, a nation of gamblers, who would stake mother, wife, and daughter on the chance of a throw. Chastity was by no means conspicuous among the female portion of the community, whose attentions to strangers appear to have exceeded the most extravagant eccentricities of hospitality. It is suggested by Colonel Yule that Ibn Mohalhal's Hazlakh were probably identical with the Kharlikhs, a potent tribe dwelling to the north of Ferghana, or Khokan. Then he crossed the frontiers of the valiant Khathlakh, who married their own sisters, and consigned adulterers to the flames. The wife was endowed with the entire property of her husband, who had, besides, to win her by one year's servitude to her father. Neither the king nor widows could venture upon matrimony. The usage of blood money prevailed among them, and mitigated feelings of vindictiveness.

The Khatiyan—doubtless the people of Khotan—are next described, whose refinement was so great that they could eat none but cooked meat. They had no king and were a law unto themselves. Dyed garments were repulsive to their taste. They had musk, and bezoar, and a stone that cured snake bites.

The last tribe before reaching the confines of China were the Bahi (the Bai, dwelling between Aksu and Kucha), whose country is called by Marco Polo 'the province of Pein,' a fertile region abounding with palms and vines. The capital city was large and populous, and its citizens were of many creeds, Jews, Christians, Mohammedans, Hindoos, and Magians. Indigo was successfully cultivated, but the rarest objects were a

green stone that was good for weak eyes, and a red stone that acted beneficially upon the spleen. At the present day the sheep farms and felt manufactures of this district are renowned throughout Eastern Toorkestan.

Quite at the commencement of the 9th century the Khalif Ool Mamoun, happening to be at Merv, was favourably impressed with the character and abilities of Ahmed, the son of Saman, a descendant of the Sassanian usurper Baharam-Choubeen, who unsuccessfully disputed the throne with Khosroo Purveez. Ahmed had four sons, to each of whom was confided a government. The eldest, named Nasr or Nusser, as Governor of Mawaralnahr, resided at Samarkand, and set his younger brother Ismael over Bokhara. Ismael was of a restless and ambitious character, and enlarged his province by the annexation of Khwarezm. A serious quarrel, however, broke out between the two brothers, which ended in a pitched battle, and the defeat of the eldest. Ismael on this occasion exhibited praiseworthy magnanimity and restored Nusser to his former dignity. After this a perfect understanding existed between them, and on the death of Nusser, Ismael united the whole of Mawaralnahr beneath his sway, and founded the dynasty of the Samanides. Fixing the seat of his government at Bokhara, he captured Herat and subdued Khorassan, and established a reputation for justice as well as for military and administrative genius.

Of Ismael's descendants there is little to be said, previous to the reign of Abdool Kassim Noah, or Ameer Noah II., who was driven from his territory by Bogra Khan, the ruler of Khokan, Kashgar, and Khotan. On the death of his enemy Noah returned to Bokhara, and was upheld by the prowess of Sebektegeen, father of Mahmoud of Ghuznee. The latter, indeed, rendered such essential service to the feeble Chief of Mawaralnahr that he was appointed Governor of Khorassan.

Noah's son Munsoor was deprived of his throne and his

eyesight by a conspiracy of the nobles, who invested his brother Abdool-Malek with the insignia of royalty. The usurper, grown arrogant through success, next sought to dispossess Mahmoud of his province of Khorassan, but was defeated in battle by that warlike prince and compelled to return with disgrace to Bokhara, which was shortly afterwards captured by the son of Bogra Khan, of Toorkestan, who carried off Abdool-Malek into captivity. The last of the Samanides was Ismael, another son of Noah II., who led a wandering life until he was slain A. D. 1004 by an officer of Mahmoud, who put the murderer to death, lest his enemies might accuse him of having connived at the murder of a prince from whose family he had received such important favours.

The weak Samanian dynasty was succeeded by the Ghuznеevides. The first sovereign of Ghuznee was a Bokharese noble, indifferently named Abestagee or Aleptekeen, who obtained the government of Khorassan, but was afterwards compelled to seek his fortunes on the other side of the Hazareh Mountains. Establishing himself at Ghuznee with a band of six or seven hundred followers, he founded an independent State, which he bequeathed to his son Isaak, whose debaucheries terminated his life at an early date. The choice of the nobles then fell upon one Sabaktagee or Sebektegeen, who had distinguished himself as a soldier of the body guard, and was thence called Gholam-i-Shah, or the king's slave.

Of Toorkish origin, Sebektegeen soon gave evidence that he had inherited at least the martial virtues of his race. Not only did he over-run the Punjab, but it was through his puissant support that Ameer Noah II. was maintained on the tottering throne of Mawaralnahr. The grateful Samanee bestowed on him, in return, the honourable title of Nusser-ood-deen, or the Victorious of the Faith, and upon his son Mahmoud the viceroyalty of Khorassan. Sebektegeen was succeeded by his

son Ismail, whose pretensions were soon forced to yield to the masterful ambition and capacity of his famous brother, the first Mohammedan invader of Hindostan, and the remainder of whose life was passed in a comfortable obscurity.

Mahmoud of Ghuznee commenced his reign with the reduction of Mooltan, but was hastily summoned back to Khorassan to oppose an invasion of the Toorks under Eylek or Elij Khan, ruler of Kashgar, reinforced by a contingent of 50,000 horse from Khotan. The two armies encountered each other near Balkh, A. D. 1007, and victory was long doubtful until Mahmoud charged in person into the thick of the mêlée, his elephant seizing with his trunk Eylek Khan's standard-bearer and flinging him aloft. A few years later Mahmoud bestowed the province of Khwarezm, with its chief city Urghunj, upon his favourite general Altoon Tash.

On Mahmoud's death, A.D. 1028, his son Massaoud succeeded to his title but not to his power. In this reign the descendants of Seljook assumed a prominent position in the affairs of Central Asia, and made themselves masters of Khorassan, Balkh, and Merou. Massaoud was deposed by his own soldiery, who raised to the throne his brother Mohammed, whose eyes he had put out, and a few years later he was murdered in prison by Mohammed's son Ahmed, without, however, his father's privity to the deed.

This foul action was speedily and terribly avenged. Massaoud's son Madood, who was then at Balkh, collected an army, crossed the mountains, and overthrew Mohammed's forces in battle, that Prince and all his sons, with the exception of one, being immediately afterwards put to death. The history of the Ghuzneevide dynasty from this time to its extinction, A. D. 1184, is characterized by Sir John Malcolm as an uninteresting and disgusting record of petty wars, rebellions, and massacres.

In the 10th and 11th centuries the Toorks—or Tatars, as they

are commonly though erroneously called by European writers —were divided into tribes, each paying a nominal obedience to an hereditary Chief, whose influence depended upon the degree of support he received from the Reish Sooffeed, or Greybeards. At times a son or nephew of the Chief, impatient of even the semblance of control, would separate from the original tribe and found a new Horde under his own name. The word Horde seems to be identical with the Persian Oordoo, signifying 'a camp,' but came to be applied to a congeries of sub-tribes inhabiting a particular district. The Chief of the Kipchak Toorks, or Kuzzaks, appears to have taken offence at the arrogance of one of his ablest officers, named Seljook, who consequently withdrew to Samarkand and became a convert to the faith of Islam. Seljook's eldest son, Mikail, was killed by an arrow while yet in the flower of manhood, but not before he had been taken into favour by Mahmoud of Ghuznee.

Mikail left two sons, whom the aged Seljook caused to be educated with great care in all the accomplishments considered becoming to a Toorkish Chief. Mahmoud of Ghuznee having expressed a desire to see these youths, whose fame had gone abroad throughout Central Asia, their uncle Israel proceeded to his court to make the preliminary arrangements. The highest marks of distinction were showered upon the envoy, who was placed in the seat of honour by Mahmoud's side during the celebration of public games got up for his entertainment. Anxious to obtain some definite knowledge of the influence exercised by Seljook's grandsons, the king asked their uncle how many horsemen they could send to him if he needed their aid. Taking one of the two arrows that he chanced to have with him, and laying it at Mahmoud's feet, Israel replied that if it were despatched to the head-quarters of his tribe, a hundred thousand horsemen would answer to the summons. But suppose further help were needed? asked the king. Israel produced the second arrow

and said: 'This will bring 50,000 more to thy support.' And should that not be enough? 'Then,' exclaimed the other, placing his bow beside the arrows, 'send that also into the land of the Toorks, and 200,000 horsemen will speed to thy help.' Mahmoud, the tradition adds, broke up the games in alarm, and consigned Israel to a fortress for life, as a hostage for the conduct of his kinsman.

Under his son Massaoud, however, the Seljookians crossed the Oxus and established themselves in Khorassan, and in A. D. 1037 Toghrul Bey Mohammed, the eldest brother, assumed the ensigns of royal power and fixed his court at Nishapoor. The younger brother, Chegher Beg Daoud, likewise cut out a principality for himself, and seized upon Herat and Merv. On Massaoud's death the two brothers with their united forces subdued Balkh and Khwarezm, and Toghrul Beg eventually conquered Irak, captured Baghdad, and took to wife the daughter of the Khalif-ool-Kaim, by whom he was appointed Vicegerent and Vicar of the Prophet, and Lord of all the Mohammedans upon earth. He was at the same time presented with seven dresses and seven slaves, to symbolize his supremacy over the seven regions nominally subject to the Commander of the Faithful. 'A veil of gold stuff, scented with musk, was thrown over his head, on which two crowns were placed, one for Arabia, the other for Persia; while two swords were girt on his loins to signify that he was ruler both of the East and of the West.' The doughty old warrior, however, enjoyed his honours but for a brief space, for he died at Rey, whither he had proceeded to consummate his marriage, at the age of seventy, A. D. 1063.

The second monarch of the Seljookian dynasty was the renowned Alp Arslan Mohammed or the Great Lion, son of Toghrul's brother Daoud or David. This great prince defeated and took prisoner Romanus Diogenes, the valiant husband of the

Empress Eudocia. His death was the result of an excess of self-reliance. Having reduced a town on the Oxus, named Berzem or Nerzem, he ordered the governor to be executed for insolence of speech and demeanour. The latter drew a knife from his boot and rushed at the monarch, who, in a loud voice, bade the attendants to stand aside. Coolly fitting an arrow to his bow, he discharged it at the distance of only a few paces. For once he missed his aim, and the next moment was mortally wounded. The two thousand armed attendants instantly fled from the scene, and the regicide would have escaped had not a tent-pitcher outside knocked him down with his mallet.

Alp Arslan was buried at Merv, and the following sentence was engraven upon his tomb: 'All you who have seen the glory of Alp Arslan exalted to the heavens, come to Merv, and you will behold it buried in the dust.' It is said that Alp Arslan was childishly proud of his title, and laboured to assume a fancied semblance to the royal animal after whom he was called. From the apex of his tiara to the end of his thick bushy beard there was a length of four feet, which added to the singularity of his personal appearance. So widely extended was his sway that it is asserted that no fewer than twelve hundred kings, princes, and sons of kings and princes, at times stood before his throne.*

His successor Malek Shah was fortunate in his Wuzeer, or Prime Minister, the celebrated Nizam-ool-Moolkh. This monarch's dominions extended from Antioch to the furthest limits of Khokan, and even Kashgar was compelled to pay tribute. It is written that the boatmen on the Oxus once complained to him that their services had been paid in drafts upon the treasury

* General Abbott says that on asking for information respecting this prince, whose name he pronounced according to the English fashion, no one seemed ever to have heard of him. He afterwards discovered that every one was more or less familiar with the history of Ulp Urslaun.

at Antioch, but the Wuzeer explained that this was done merely to exhibit the prince's glory and power, and the bills upon Syria were paid in full by the treasury of Bokhara. Another tradition will have it that Malek Shah twelve times traversed his vast territories from end to end; but, considering the slow rate of travelling in those days, it may be permissible to discount this statement. His capital city was Ispahan, and prayers for his health and happiness were daily offered up in Jerusalem, Mecca, Medina, Baghdad, Ispahan, Rey, Bokhara, Samarkand, Urghunj, and Kashgar.

A seemingly simple act of this powerful sovereign was productive of disastrous consequences in the future. The foundation of the kingdom of Khwarezm, and the subsequent conquest of Central Asia by Chinghiz Khan, may be traced to the bestowal of the viceroyalty of that province upon an officer of his household, named Noshtegeen Ghirjah, whose duty it was to pour water over the royal hands after each meal. Noshtegeen's son, Kootb-ood-deen Mohammed, renounced his allegiance to the Seljookian princes, though he acted on all occasions as a faithful friend and ally. Malek Shah left four sons, all of whom reigned in their turn, but the youngest, Sanjar, alone attracts the attention of posterity, and that chiefly through his misfortunes. He began, indeed, by recovering Bokhara and Samarkand, which his feeble brothers had suffered to be wrested from them, but he was signally defeated by Gour Khan, ruler of Kara Katay, or Central Tatary, and forced to flee to Termedh.

A worse disaster awaited him. He had allowed 40,000 Toorkomans from Ghuz to settle in Khotl and the adjacent districts, on their engaging to supply him annually with 24,000 sheep. The agent of his purveyor, however, demanding, one year, more than the king's due, was instantly put to death by the barbarians. The governor of Balkh, vainly attempting to

reduce them to obedience, likewise lost his life. Though personally disposed to overlook these acts of violence, Sanjar was forced by his nobles to take the field, but his army was utterly routed and himself made prisoner. The Toorkomans then pillaged Merv for three days, and tortured the inhabitants to compel them to discover their hidden treasures. Sanjar remained a captive in their hands for four years, when his rescue was effected and he escaped to Termedh, whence he proceeded to Merv. During his captivity, however, the country had been reduced to misery and desolation. The nobles had sacrificed every other consideration to the gratification of their own pleasures and passions, and the aspect of the land was as though a hurricane had swept over it. The spectacle of such widespread wretchedness broke the heart of the aged monarch, who died A. D. 1157, in his 73rd year.

More than once in the course of his troubled reign of 40 years, Sanjar had been engaged in hostilities with Atseez, son of Kootb-ood-deen Mohammed, tributary king of Khwarezm. Driven to rebellion by the arts and insolence of Sanjar's nobles, Atseez had been defeated in battle and driven from his territories, while his son was put to death and his government conferred upon Sanjar's brother, Suliman Shah. He soon returned, however, and on his approach Suliman took to flight. Again did Sanjar invade Khwarezm, and Atseez, besieged in his capital, was compelled to sue for mercy from his suzerain. Pardoned and restored to power, he again sought to establish his independence. This time Sanjar commenced by the reduction of Hazarasp, and thence advanced upon the capital. Conscious of his inability to offer effectual resistance, Atseez sent valuable presents to the king, and obtained terms of peace, on condition that he repaired in person to his conqueror's camp on the banks of the Jyhoon, and prostrated himself in token of subjection.

Only in part was this condition fulfilled. Atseez proceeded,

indeed, to the royal camp, but refused to dismount from his horse, and merely bent his head, whereupon Sanjar declared himself satisfied and returned to Merv. Subsequently Atseez extended his sway eastwards as far as Otrar, and died A. D. 1156, but his career of conquest was pursued by his son, Ayeel Arslan, to the south-west as well as to the east.

Ayeel Arslan's younger son, Sooltan Shah, usurped the throne of Khwarezm on his father's death, but his reign consisted of one long contest with his elder brother, Sooltan Alla-ood-deen Takhesh, who succeeded to power A. D. 1193.

For the space of nearly forty years the Seljookian race had shown unmistakable signs of exhaustion and decay. The last of that dynasty was Toghrul III., who fell in battle at Rhé, or Rey, in a vain attempt to recover Irak from Takhesh, the ruler of Khwarezm. In a state of mad intoxication he rode at the head of his army, shouting aloud a stanza from Firdousi, and brandishing his iron mace. Making an idle blow he overbalanced himself, and, striking his own horse on the fore leg, came heavily to the ground, where he was speedily despatched and his head cut off.

Thus terminated the rule of the descendants of Seljook, after an existence of 158 years, and the subordinate branches in Kerman and Anatolia also died out shortly afterwards. Takhesh Khan, the conqueror of Toghrul III., was himself defeated not long afterwards on the banks of the Syhoon by the Khan of Soghnak, and died A. D. 1200, while on the march against Alamut, the chief seat of the Ishmaelians, or Assassins, the notorious sect, once so wildly feared, founded by Hassan Soubah, or Sheikh-ool-Gebel, commonly known to Europeans as the Old Man of the Mountain.

Under Takhesh Khan's son, Kootb-ood-deen Mohammed, the kingdom of Khwarezm experienced both extremes of fortune. In the beginning, Mohammed lost and recovered Kho-

rassan, and, following up his success, brought under subjection several provinces of Persia. He then made himself master of Bokhara and Samarkand, and, routing the forces of Gourkhan, Khan of Kara-Katay, or Central Tatary, took possession of Otrar. Soon after his return to Khwarezm he was startled by the intelligence that the Karakatayans had laid siege to Samarkand. Taking the field without loss of time, he forced the enemy to raise the siege and give battle. While the contest was raging a terrible dust storm arose, and both armies falling into inextricable confusion, broke up and fled.

His next exploit was less ambiguous, and Ghuznee yielded to his arms, on the death of Shahab-ood-deen, the Ghourian. His good fortune, however, now deserted him. While on the march to Baghdad he received despatches from the Governor of Otrar, informing him of the arrival of certain persons who gave themselves out to be traders, but who were evidently spies of the Mongol Chief, Chinghiz Khan. In reply, Mohammed ordered the Governor to put the spies to death, but one of the party escaped and reported the fate of his comrades to Chinghiz Khan, who, immediately, despatched an ambassador to demand reparation for this atrocious outrage. In defiance of the most elementary principles of international law, the hapless envoy was handed over to the executioner.

The Mongol leader was not of a temperament to allow such an insult to pass unavenged, and instantly prepared for the invasion of Mawaralnahr. Mohammed hurried back to avert the overthrow of his kingdom, but on reaching Nishapoor gave himself up for an entire month to drunkenness and debauchery. At last, rousing himself to action, he pushed on to Bokhara, where he again indulged in fatal excesses. Hearing that Chinghiz Khan was marching upon Samarkand in person, while his eldest son Joujee was advancing through Toorkestan, he resolved to encounter the less formidable of his enemies, and

hastened to meet the latter, but notwithstanding the overwhelming superiority of his forces Mohammed was unable to do more than hold his ground. He thereupon retreated to Samarkand, where he is said to have collected an army of 400,000 horsemen—evidently a monstrous exaggeration. Instead, however, of hurling this immense body of cavalry upon the Mongols he broke it up into detachments to garrison his frontier towns, and withdrew into Khorassan, after instructing his mother Toorkan Khatoon to convey his women and children into Mazanderan. That strong-minded lady acted up to his instructions, after flinging the youngest of the children into the Jyhoon.

From that moment the doomed prince seemed incapable of forming or fulfilling any resolution. Instead of defending the fords of the Jyhoon, and the passes of the Elburz mountains, he wandered without fixed purpose hither and thither, closely pursued by his inexorable foe, and wasting every respite in hard drinking. His wives and children falling into the hands of the Mongols were cruelly ill-treated and murdered, and at last Mohammed himself died of grief and shame on a small island in the Caspian. To such destitution had he been driven that he was buried in the clothes he wore, because he left not enough money to purchase a shroud. His eldest son, Rokken-ood-deen, was captured in Firozekoh, in 1222, by Chinghiz Khan, and put to death without pity. Another son of Mohammed, named Gyath-ood-deen, after fleeing from one place to another, took refuge with Borah Hajet, a Kara-Khatayan officer in the service of his unhappy father, and who had established himself in Kerman. Regardless alike of the laws of hospitality and the claims of gratitude, the cautious barbarian murdered his defenceless guest.

Jelal-ood-deen, yet another son of Mohammed, deserved a better fate than dogged his wandering career. On his father's

death he returned to Khwarezm, which had not then been entered by the victorious Moghuls. Finding it impossible to maintain himself in that country he fought his way to Ghuznee, and overthrew the enemy in two engagements. He was compelled, however, to retreat before the vastly superior forces of Chinghiz Khan, even to the banks of the Indus. At last brought to bay, he fought with desperate resolution until his little band was completely overpowered. Then, throwing off his armour, he swam his horse across the river, and, on gaining the opposite side, coolly dismounted and laid his charger's accoutrements together with his own clothes out in the sun to dry. Chinghiz, who had been watching the young hero for some time, is said to have uttered an exclamation of admiration, which has more of the Persian than the Moghul ring:—'Like a lion, invincible in the conflict of the field of battle; like an alligator, unterrified in the foaming stream; no father could ever boast of a son like this!'

For the next two years Jelal-ood-deen plundered the country lying to the eastward of the Indus, and then directed his steps to Irak Ajem, taking to wife on the way the daughter of that Borah Hajet who, a few years later, murdered his brother Gyath-ood-deen. His next achievement was the defeat of an army of 20,000 men sent against him by the Khalif Ool Nusser, as though the Mohammedans did not need to be in perfect union and harmony among themselves, in face of the terrible foe who was sweeping their religion from off the face of the earth.

From this time the fugitive prince of Khwarezm led a restless, unsettled life, gaining many victories, but unable to secure a permanent position. Sustaining, in his turn, a severe defeat at the hands of the Mongols, he retreated to Ispahan, whence he again issued and invaded Georgia. After a while he began to indulge too freely in wine, and on the barbarians pouring into

Mazanderan he fled from Eklat, leaving his wives, children, and dependants to be ruthlessly massacred. As to his own end, nothing certain is known. According to one account, Jelal-ood-deen was assassinated in Kohistan by a Koord, while he slept; but others assert that he disguised himself as a Sooffee, or dervish, and so baffled further pursuit. In either case, nothing was heard of him after A. D. 1231, eleven years having then elapsed since his father's flight to Khorassan and the downfall of the first Mohammedan kingdoms of Central Asia.

CHAPTER IV.

THE MOGHULS.

ORIGIN OF THE MOGHULS — CHINGHIZ KHAN — CONQUEST OF NORTHERN CHINA—MASSACRE OF TATAR ENVOYS AT OTRAR—REDUCTION OF OTRAR—DEFEAT AND FLIGHT OF MOHAMMED SHAH—CAPTURE OF BOKHARA—CAPTURE OF SAMARKAND, TERMEDH, BALKH, TALIKHAN, MERV, NISHAPOOR, HERAT, AND URGHUNJ—DEATH OF CHINGHIZ—HIS YASAK OR CODE—BATOU KHAN'S IRRUPTION INTO EUROPE—THE MOGHUL EMPIRE—PAPAL MISSIONS TO THE GREAT KHAN—REPLY OF KUYOUK KHAN—MANGOU KHAN'S REBUKE—MISSION OF WILLIAM DE RUBRUQUIS—TATAR CUSTOMS—THE MOGHUL COURT AT KARAKORAM.

MOHAMMEDAN writers—heedless of the Horatian warning to future historians of the Trojan war to dash at once into their subject, avoiding all allusion to 'the twin-egg'—make a point of tracing the genealogies of heroes and nations back to the Patriarch Noah. The Tatars and Moghuls are thus made to derive their descent from Japhet, whose eldest son was named Toork, and who was also the father of Rouss, described as a fierce savage and yet the original deviser of a system of judicial inquiry. Alenjah Khan, in the fourth generation from Toork, had two sons, born at a birth, afterwards known as Tatar and Moghul, between whom, at his death, he equally divided his extensive possessions.

Among the rare objects bequeathed to the latter was a stone inscribed with one of the mysterious names of the Deity, and called by the Arabs the 'Rainstone,' owing to the virtue it was supposed to possess of compelling or dispersing the water-clouds. The Persians, however, refer to it as the 'Aidstone,'

or 'Stone of Power,' and endow it with many other attributes.

The original haunts of the Moghuls were the inhospitable steppes lying to the north and north-west of China, whence issued the barbaric hordes with whom Attila, the Scourge of God, ravaged Europe in the fifth century. A fierce untutored race of wandering shepherds, of hideous aspect, they spread themselves in the 13th century, like a devastating flood, not only over Asia from the Sea of China to the Black Sea, but also over Hungary, and threatened to overwhelm the whole civilized world. 'From the remote shores of Eastern Asia'—says Mr Murray in the Introductory Essay to his edition of Marco Polo —'westward, as far as the Rhine, extends a vast plain, which, during the whole period of ancient history, presented an aspect of the deepest barbarism. The population had nowhere advanced beyond the pastoral state, whose occupations they combined with the more favourite ones of war and plunder. Such enterprises were greatly facilitated by the moveable nature of their property, which rendered it easy to assemble in large bodies, and march to the remotest regions. They were tempted, moreover, by the view of rich and civilized kingdoms, extending in a continuous belt along the whole southern border of both continents. Hence, in the earliest times, arose a mighty and incessant impulse; so that, from the heart of the north, there issued in successive swarms, not armies, but whole nations, with wives, children, herds and flocks, cutting their way with the sword into fairer and more fruitful lands. The shepherds of Scythia seated themselves on the greatest thrones of the East.'

Although these migratory multitudes consisted chiefly of Moghuls, or Mongols, they are best known to Europeans by the name of Tatars, partly because the latter formed the vanguard of the host that overran Hungary in the 13th century, and partly because of the similarity of their name to the already familar Tartarus. For the sake of convenience, therefore,—

and notwithstanding the inaccuracy of the term,—the more common appellation will be frequently adopted in this narrative, in speaking of the achievements of Chinghiz Khan, the great leader of the Moghuls.

The real name of this remarkable man was Temucheen, or Temugeen. He was born on the banks of the Onon, in the beginning of the second half of the 12th century. At the death of his father he was only thirteen years of age, and had to provide for four younger brothers. This would have been no difficult task had not the 30,000 families who had recognized the chieftainship of his father, refused to pay him the tithes due to a Khan. His first attempt to coerce his refractory vassals terminated in a drawn battle, and Temugeen found himself under the necessity of suing for hospitality at the Court of Ouang Khan, ruler of the Keraites.

This prince is supposed by certain oriental scholars to have been the original of Prester John, about whom so much nonsense was written by the missionaries and religious scribes of those days. According to John de Plano Carpini, as rendered in Astley's collection, Chinghiz was defeated by Prester John, King of Greater India, by means of hollow images made of copper and filled with fire. 'These were set on Horses and a Man behind each, who with a Pair of Bellows blew Fire upon the Enemy; which burnt them, and raised a great Smoke.' The credulous Franciscan, however, seems to have been addicted to 'Travellers' Tales,' for he relates on the authority of certain Russian priests, that when Chinghiz and his victorious army were returning from India 'through the Desarts, they met with a People whose Men were shaped like Dogs. These Monsters on the Approach of the Mongols ran into a River, and then rolling themselves on the Ground, the Dust and Water became frozen together (it being Winter) and formed a Kind of Armour, Proof against the Swords and

Arrows of their Enemies: whom they fell upon Tooth and Nail, and thus drove them out of their Countrey.'

It is more certain that the youthful Temugeen obtained favour in the eyes of the Prince of the Keraites, whose capital city was Karakoram, and commanded his forces in several successful engagements. His good fortune naturally raised him up some powerful enemies, and he was again forced to seek safety in flight. It was not long, however, before he found himself at the head of a band of trusty followers, whose numbers were continually recruited through the prospect of plunder. As soon as he judged his means adequate to his purpose, Temugeen invaded and subdued the country of the Keraites, and the skull of Ouang Khan, enchased in silver, became one of his drinking cups. At length he was enabled to overthrow the collected forces of his enemies, and to inflict a horrible vengeance. Having prepared seventy cauldrons of boiling water, he flung into each a Moghul Chief, and sold as slaves their women, children, and aged parents. The young men of the conquered tribes he incorporated into the ranks of his army, and never had reason to regret the confidence he placed in their martial and predatory habits.

By the time he had attained his fortieth year Temugeen had so completely established his position, that he felt he could venture upon convoking a Koroultai or general Diet of the Moghul tribes. At this meeting a naked devotee, who was believed to have ascended to heaven on a white horse, saluted the conqueror by the title of Zingiz or Chinghiz Khan, which, in the language of the Moghuls, signified Very Great, or Greatest Prince. The assembled Khans then accepted him as their Khakhan or Qaan, and thus, A.D. 1206, the wandering adventurer Temugeen became the sovereign of Mongolia.

The first, as also the last, enterprise of Chinghiz Khan was directed against the kingdom of Tangut to the north-west of

China, which he speedily brought under subjection. The Uigurs prudently sent in their submission, as did also the Kirghiz, who further presented their new suzerain with a 'Shungar,' a white bird with red eyes and bill. Having consolidated his authority over the pastoral hordes roaming over the steppes to the north and north-west of China, Chinghiz resolved to carry his victorious arms into that ancient empire, of which the Moghuls were still nominally vassals. A haughty answer having been returned to his insolent demand for tribute in token of obedience, Chinghiz let loose his fierce barbarians upon that rich and effeminate people. After the storm and pillage of ninety cities, he was rapidly marching upon Khanbaleg or Cambalu, the modern Pekin, or northern capital, when his further advance was checked by overtures for peace too favourable to be disregarded. An enormous sum in gold and silver, 500 youths, 500 virgins, 3000 horses, and marriage with a Princess of China, purchased for a time the withdrawal of the Moghul hordes.

The weakest of these inducements to forbearance was doubtless the honour of a matrimonial alliance with the Imperial family, for a harem of 500 wives and concubines must have rendered Chinghiz comparatively indifferent to considerations of that kind. Each of his wives could boast of royal blood in her veins, and five of them are reported to have been especially dear to their uxorious lord. According to Abou'l Ghazee Khan's translator and commentator, the Tatars as a people entertained singularly loose ideas on the subject of their conjugal relations. If they did not marry their natural mothers it was simply, he says, because they had a distaste for old women. With regard to their wives he adds, 'des qu'elles approchent les quarante ans ils ne couchent plus avec elles, et ne les gardent tout au plus que comme des vieilles ménagères, aux quelles on jette un morceau de pain pour avoir soin de l'économie de la maison, et pour servir

les jeunes femmes qui peuvent venir occuper leur place dans le lit du maistre.'

At a later period Chinghiz commissioned two of his best generals to complete the work he had been tempted to abandon. The reduction of Khanbaleg proved a tedious and laborious operation. Timid in the field, the Chinese fought bravely behind walls, and, when their ammunition was exhausted, discharged ingots of gold and silver from their engines. Reduced by famine to the last extremity, they devoured the bodies of the slain and perhaps of their own children, but still refused to surrender until the Moghuls drove a mine into the heart of the city, which was then sacked and plundered, while the palace is said to have burned for thirty days. In the end, the Emperor poisoned himself at Nankin, his southern capital, and the five northern provinces were annexed to the Moghul Empire. At that time, and, indeed, until a much later period, Northern China was called Kitai, from a people of the Manchu race, who emigrated from the north-west towards the end of the 10th century, and over-ran all China to the north of the Yellow River. The domination of these conquerors lasted for nearly two centuries, but the country continued to be known by their name long after the decay of their power.

After the conquest of Kitai, or Cathay—as it came to be called in the 13th century—Chinghiz Khan applied himself to the pacification of his vast dominions, and enforced such perfect security for life and property that Abou'l Ghazee Kan asserts that 'if any one had wished to carry openly, in his hands, gold or silver from one end of the empire to the other, he could have done so without the slightest risk.' Making due allowance for the hyperbolical phraseology of an oriental historian, it is probably no exaggeration to say that order and tranquillity so far prevailed that foreign traders were encouraged to enter his territories. Certain Khivan merchants, it is related, exhibited

their wares to the Khakhan, but asked such preposterous prices that he grew enraged, and told them he understood the value of their goods better than they imagined. Thereupon he showed them some articles of equally good quality which he had purchased on far more reasonable terms, and to punish their greed he confiscated all their property. The next batch of traders prudently left it to the Khakhan to adjust the prices, and were rewarded for their apparent confidence in his sense of justice by receiving double the worth of their merchandise. This munificence became blazed abroad, and a brisk retail commerce began to spring up under the Khakhan's protection.

A large caravan being about to set out for Khwarezm, Chinghiz sent with them three ambassadors to Mohammed Shah, the bearers of valuable presents and complimentary messages. It so chanced that when this caravan reached Otrar, the governor of the place was one Inallzik, whom the Sultan of Khwarezm, his kinsman, had been pleased to call Gageer Khan. One of the merchants who had known this man previous to his accession to dignity, addressed him by his original name, which so enraged him that he threw the whole party into prison. The governor further wrote to the Sultan and informed him that certain persons had come to Otrar representing themselves to be Arabs and merchants, but that he had reason to believe that they were Moghul spies. In reply Mohammed Shah, then on his march against Baghdad, hastily despatched instructions to Gageer Khan to put them to death. These orders were faithfully executed, except that one of the merchants escaped and reported the horrible butchery to Chinghiz.

Failing to obtain redress, the Khakhan declared war against Mohammed Shah, and made extensive preparations for taking the field. Two of his sons, Ougadai and Zagatai—or Okkadai and Chagatai—were detailed with a large force against Otrar,

which was defended by a garrison of 60,000 men. The place held out bravely for five months, when one of the Mohammedan generals with 10,000 men went over to the Tatars, by whom they were brutally massacred as traitors. The Tatars, however, did not hesitate to avail themselves of the treachery they professed to abhor, and had no scruple about entering the town through the gate that had been left open for them. Gageer Khan then retired into the citadel, whence he made frequent sorties, and greatly harassed the besiegers. But numbers at length prevailed, and the citadel was carried by storm. After performing prodigies of valour the ill-fated commander barricaded himself in his private apartments with two devoted followers, and, when they were slain and his supply of arrows exhausted, he still maintained a hopeless resistance by hurling down upon his foes stones and missiles, handed to him by his wife. In the end he was overcome and thrown into chains, until an order for his execution arrived from the Khakhan.

In the mean while Chinghiz, deputing his eldest son Joujee, or Zouzee, to make a detour through Toorkestan, led the main body of his forces in person against Samarkand. Deeming it an easier exploit to crush the son than the father, Mohammed Shah marched in the first instance against Joujee, who opposed his superior numbers with such desperate tenacity that the darkness of night alone put an end to the conflict. Dismayed by this terrible illustration of the nature of the danger he had provoked, the Sultan fell back upon Samarkand, while Joujee with his gallant but shattered army rejoined his father. The united Tatar host then continued their march upon Samarkand, without encountering any further opposition in the open country.

The Sultan meanwhile dispersed his 400,000 men among the frontier towns, and withdrew to Khwarezm without striking

another blow in defence of his kingdom. One of his first acts on reaching his capital was, in a fit of drunkenness, to order the execution of a Sheikh venerated by the common people, but whom he suspected of an illicit intrigue with his mother. On the following day, under an access of remorse, he sent a bowl filled with gold and gems to another Sheikh, and prayed that his crime might be forgiven, but his offerings were rejected and pardon refused.

After the capture of two or three smaller towns Chinghiz Khan appeared under the walls of Bokhara, A. D. 1219, accompanied, says Gibbon, by 'a body of Chinese engineers skilled in the mechanic arts, informed perhaps of the secret of gunpowder, and capable, under his discipline, of attacking a foreign country with more vigour and success than they had defended their own (*sic*).' A night sortie of the powerful garrison was repulsed with such fearful slaughter that some 20,000 soldiers withdrew from the city and took the road to Khwarezm. They were overtaken, however, by the Tatar cavalry near the banks of the Jyhoon and cut to pieces.

The keys of Bokhara were then surrendered in token of submission, and Chinghiz rode his charger into the principal, or Friday, Mosque. Being informed, in reply to his question if this were the Sultan's palace, that it was the House of God, he dismounted and ascended the pulpit, while the chief magistrates and mollahs held his horse. Flinging the Koran on to the pavement, he called aloud, 'The hay is cut; give your horses fodder;' and straightway, with exultant shouts, the barbarians spread themselves through the city, insulting and plundering the terror-stricken citizens. Many of them fell to eating and drinking in the mosque, wine and food being brought to them by Sheikhs and mollahs. Chinghiz himself repaired to the open space in front of the Ark, or Palace, and explained to the assembled townspeople that all this misery had been brought

upon them by their Sultan's atrocious violation of the law of nations. Learning shortly afterwards that some of the Sultan's soldiers were being sheltered and concealed by the inhabitants, he gave orders to set fire to the town, which, being built chiefly of wood, was soon burnt to the ground with the exception of the spacious stone structure known as the Ark, or Government House. Thirty thousand human beings were put to the sword, and the survivors sold as slaves. So complete was the work of destruction that one of the few who escaped being asked to describe what he had witnessed, contented himself with repeating a Persian distich:

Amedend u kendend u sukhtend
u kushtend u burdend u reftend.

They came, destroyed, burnt,
Murdered, robbed, and went.

However, a little before his death Chinghiz rebuilt the town, but many years passed before Bokhara recovered any portion of its former wealth and importance. The miserable fate of Mohammed Shah has been already described, as well as the heroic conduct and misfortunes of his son Jelal-ood-deen, and the wretched tale needs not to be repeated. It remains, however, to be told how the strongly fortified cities of Samarkand and Urghunj were brought under the Tatar yoke. According to Abou'l Ghazee Khan, the garrison of Samarkand had been reinforced by an army of 100,000 men, commanded by 30 generals, and rendered more formidable by an array of elephants, an animal little known to the Tatars and therefore much dreaded. A broad wet moat was dug round the town, and every preparation made for a prolonged resistance. The besieged, however, seem to have been discouraged by the repulse of their first sortie, and, though they successfully beat off an assault that lasted till nightfall, the generals fell out with the chief Mufti and Kazi, who thereupon opened to the enemy

the gate reserved for festival occasions, of which they were the official but untrustworthy custodians. The entire garrison is said to have been massacred, with the exception of a thousand men who contrived to escape.

Chinghiz distributed 30,000 of the inhabitants among his officers, and sent no small number into his Chinese provinces to lay out pleasure-grounds, while upon those who were suffered to remain in their ruined homes was imposed an annual tribute of 300,000 gold dinars. From Samarkand he himself proceeded in a southerly direction against Termedh, which he sacked and destroyed. It is related that not one of the town's-folk was left alive with the exception of one old woman, who offered by way of ransom a pearl of exceeding great value. Being pressed to disclose her treasure, she confessed that she had swallowed it; whereupon she was ripped up alive and her truthfulness made manifest. The bodies of the dead were then treated in a similar manner, but not to the same advantage.

Balkh, esteemed in the East as the oldest city in the world, experienced the same fate at Termedh. Some idea of its extent and riches may possibly be formed from the statement that it contained 1200 large mosques, without including chapels, and 200 public baths for the use of foreign merchants and travellers —though it has been suggested that the more correct reading would be 200 mosques and 1200 baths. Anxious to avert the horrors of storm and pillage, the citizens at once offered to capitulate, but Chinghiz, distrusting the sincerity of their submission so long as Sultan Mohammed Shah was yet alive, preferred to carry the place by force of arms—an achievement of no great difficulty. A horrible butchery ensued, and the 'Tabernacle of Islam'—as the pious town was called—was razed to the ground. In the words of the Persian poet, quoted by Major Price, 'The noble city he laid as smooth as the palm of his hand—its spacious and lofty structures he levelled in the dust.'

The reduction of Talikhan was a more serious operation. Holding a position of great natural strength, this comparatively small town checked the advance of the Moghuls for seven months, before it was taken by storm and its defenders put to the sword. Anderab, situated near the foot of the Hazareh Mountains, marked by its smoking ruins the victorious progress of the barbarians; but at the siege of Bamian Chinghiz lost his favourite grandson, the son of Chagatai, and scarce satiated his fury by the total demolition of the town and the unpitying slaughter of its inhabitants, so that not one survived. The desperate valour of Jelal-ood-deen, indeed, more than once inflicted severe losses upon the Tatar hosts, but like a swarm of devouring locusts they still swept on, regardless of the breaches torn through their dense array.

The flourishing city of Merou or Merv, had at first opened its gates to Toulai, the fourth son of the Khakhan, but on his departure set up the standard of revolt. The respite was brief, the revenge unsparing. Retracing his steps, the Tatar Chief again appeared before its walls, and in three weeks overpowered all opposition. The amount of treasure and valuable effects that became the prize of the conquerors is described as almost fabulous. The inhabitants being ordered to march out into the plain were massacred in large batches, but so vast was the population that it was not until the close of the fourth day that the last party went forth to their doom. The artisans, however, were separated from the rest of the multitude, and kept alive to work for their conquerors. The slain have been estimated at 100,000, with the remark that this was the fourth time that Merv had been desolated, and that on each occasion upwards of 50,000 persons had been cut to pieces. These numbers are obviously exaggerated, though an authority cited by Major Price declares that the number of those who perished at the hands of Toulai's barbarians, 'amounted to a thousand

thousand and three hundred thousand and a fraction.' From Merv, Toulai turned to the north-west, and made himself master of the prosperous trading town of Nishapoor, which he pillaged and depopulated. Directing his course once more to the southward, Toulai laid siege to Herat, whose governor made seven brilliant sorties, but, being killed in the eighth, his troops fell into disorder and the Tatars entered the town pêle-mêle with the fugitives. The garrison alone suffered death, the citizens being pardoned and spared. The victorious general then hastened to rejoin his father, who had been detained all this time beneath the walls of Talikhan.

No sooner had Toulai withdrawn than the Heratees broke out into open revolt, and murdered the garrison left within their walls. Bitterly rebuking his son for not bearing in mind the example of Merv, Chinghiz detailed one of his best generals with 80,000 men, and with orders not to leave a soul alive. The rebellious city was speedily reduced, and so faithfully did the Tatar general execute the commission he had received, that, on the withdrawal of his host, only fifteen miserable beings crept out of the ruins in which they had concealed themselves.

While Chinghiz and Toulai were thus engaged in the work of bloodshed and desolation in the provinces of Khorassan, Badakhshan, and what is now called Afghanistan, the three elder sons of the Khakhan were similarly occupied in Khwarezm and Persia. The siege of Urghunj, the capital of Khwarezm, detained the Tatars for seven months. Ignorant of their near approach, the governor had suffered the citizens to leave their flocks and herds in the open plain. Suddenly, the advanced guard of the Tatars came in sight, when a force of 10,000 men was sent out to protect the sheep and cattle. After some brisk skirmishing the Tatars feigned a retreat and led their pursuers into an ambuscade, from which scarce a hundred escaped to tell the tale of their discomfiture. Vexed with the delay, the

brothers, who in turns commanded for a day, laid the blame of failure one upon the other, until Chinghiz vested the supreme command in the hands of his second son Octai, or Okkadai. Urghunj was shortly afterwards carried by storm, and it is said that 100,000 of the inhabitants were slaughtered, and as many more sold into slavery. It is also stated that the Tatars diverted the waters of the Jyhoon from their natural channel, and turned them against the walls of the town, which, being constructed of mud and sand, crumbled away and opened a wide breach.

On the subjugation of Khwarezm the Tatar Chiefs carried their arms beyond the Elburz mountains, and, dividing their forces, defeated in succession the Alans, the Kipchaks, and the Ooruss. Again effecting a junction amid the mountains of Circassia, they returned to Bokhara, after making a circuit round the north and west sides of the Caspian—a feat then accomplished for the first time. Abou'l Ghazee's translator, Bentinck, was, however, convinced that had Peter the Great lived a little longer, he would have undertaken and executed an enterprise so full of glory; and, further, that without some such military expedition there was little chance of obtaining an accurate knowledge of the eastern shores of that sea, as it was impossible for private individuals to visit the different Tatar hordes without wilfully exposing themselves to great danger.

Chinghiz also returned to Bokhara, then beginning to rise anew out of its ruins, but was allowed brief space to indulge in repose. The people of Tangut, his first conquest, took heart to rebel against his authority and to reassert their independence. The Khakhan made immediate preparations for their complete subjugation, but was overtaken by death, A.D. 1227, in the 65th year of his age.

His eldest son Joujee having died a short time previously, Chinghiz appointed Oktai his successor, but charged his sons to conceal his death until they had suppressed the Tangut

rebellion. The campaign was carried out in the spirit of the deceased hero. Thousands were slain, thousands were sold into captivity, several towns were levelled with the ground, and the country generally was laid waste. It is reported that the dying monarch summoned the three surviving sons by his chief wife to his bed-side, and handing to them in turn a sheaf of arrows desired them to break the bundle in twain. Each essayed his utmost, but all failed. He then bade them take out the arrows separately, when no difficulty was experienced in breaking them.

Whether or not this ancient apologue was enacted on this interesting occasion, the three sons lived together in perfect harmony. Though nominally supreme, Oktai seldom adopted any important line of action without previous consultation with the prudent and sagacious Chagatai, whose personal sway extended over Mawaralnahr, Kashgaria, Badakhshan, Ghuznein, and, in fact, as far as the Indus. This prince died in 1243, but his dynasty retained at least the semblance of royal power for upwards of a century, the last of the line being Kasan Sultan Khan, who fell in battle against Ameer Kasagan, a descendant of Oktai. By that time, however, the title of Khakhan was but the shadow of a name. Every tribal chief was more or less independent, and confusion and anarchy prevailed on all sides.

To Toulai, the fourth son, were assigned Persia and Khorassan, but he died three years after his father, leaving three illustrious sons—Mangou Khan, who succeeded to the dignity of Khakhan, or Khan of Khans, on the death of Oktai's son Gayuk, or Kuyuk Khan; Koublai Khan, who was Mangou's successor; and Houlakoo Khan, who destroyed the Khalifat, and put down the sect of Ishmael, commonly called the Assassins. Joujee, the eldest son of Chinghiz, had also a son, Batou Khan, whose name was destined to strike terror not only into China but into Europe.

Chinghiz Khan was not merely a barbarian conqueror—he was also a legislator. Not content with the work of destruction, he was ambitious to raise up a durable structure on broad and solid foundations. His religion was a pure deism, though both Moghuls and Tatars made to themselves tribal images, while many adopted the religion of their nearest neighbours, whether Christians, Mussulmans, or Buddhists. Perfect toleration was the natural fruit of this general indifferentism. Chinghiz would have no titles of nobility. There should be but one Khan or Khakhan, whose election rested with his lineal descendants and the heads of tribes. Every Moghul was bound from his birth to serve the State, and chiefly by military service, but on no account could a Moghul ever act in a menial capacity. Capital punishment awaited murderers, adulterers, perjurers, and horse and cattle stealers. Smaller thefts were expiated by flogging, or by restitution to the extent of nine times the value of the stolen article. Plurality of wives was permitted, as well as concubinage, but the children of a concubine were more lightly esteemed than those of a wife.

To allay the rancour of family feuds Chinghiz devised, or confirmed, a practice eminently calculated to appeal to the imagination and feelings of a rude people. The deceased child of one house might be contracted in marriage to the deceased child of another house, and this posthumous union was held to bind together the living as by a blood alliance. The contract was burned to ashes, that its spirit might ascend in the smoke to the homes of the departed.

The army was divided into tens, hundreds, thousands, tens of thousands, and so forth, each under the command of an officer who was made responsible for the discipline and equipments of his men. The Moghul arms consisted of bows and arrows, scymitars, and iron maces, which they wielded with vigour and adroitness. It is said that Chinghiz took the field

with upwards of 600,000 troops on entering into hostilities with the ruler of Khwarezm.

In time of peace, the Moghuls were inured by the labours of the chase for the fatigue and privations of war. At the commencement of the cold season the army would encircle an immense plain, as large as an English county, and, gradually closing up, would drive all the wild animals to a common centre, when the most adventurous youths would seek to distinguish themselves in single combat with the fiercest denizens of the swamp and jungle. The hunt would last through the whole winter, and served as a splendid training for the hardships of the ensuing campaign.

This Yasak or Code—the word signifying 'prohibition'—remained in force until the conversion of the Tatars to Islam, and was regarded by Timour with respect and admiration. It is true that it was mainly directed to raise up and maintain a nation of warriors, and that the profession of arms was the only pursuit deemed worthy of a Moghul, but similar notions prevailed in Europe at that time, and western princes and barons were quite as illiterate as the unlettered Khakhan of the Tatars.

Of Oktai, it may be truly said that he walked in the footsteps of his father. His first warlike operations resulted in the extinction of the Kin dynasty, and the consolidation of the Tatar supremacy over all China to the north of the Great Kiang. Flushed by his easy triumphs in the East, Oktai resolved, about the year 1234, to bring the West likewise under his sway. Placing his nephew Batou, son of his eldest brother Joujee, at the head of half a million of savage warriors, he let him loose upon Europe. His choice of a general was justified by the event. 'After a festival of forty days,' writes the historian of the Roman Empire, 'Batou set forward on this great expedition; and such was the speed and ardour of his innumerable squad-

rons that in less than six years they had measured a line of ninety degrees of longitude, a fourth part of the circumference of the globe. The great rivers of Asia and Europe, the Volga and Kama, the Don and Borysthenes, the Vistula and Danube, they either swam with their horses, or passed on the ice, or traversed in leathern boats, which followed the camp, and transported their waggons and artillery.'

While Batou in person overran Russia, and imposed tribute on the conquered province—little prescient of the future—one of his lieutenants entered Poland and burned Cracow to the ground. Breslau was shortly afterwards reduced to ashes, and on the 12th April, 1241, the Tatar host routed in battle at Lignitz, the united forces of the Poles, Moravians, and Silesians, under Duke Henry of Silesia, and filled nine sacks with the ears of the slain. Following up his success, Batou next invaded Hungary, defeated King Bela IV., sacked and destroyed Pesth, and ravaged the entire country with fire and sword.

'The Latin world,' continues Gibbon, 'was darkened by this cloud of savage hostility: a Russian fugitive carried the alarm to Sweden; and the remote nations of the Baltic and the ocean trembled at the approach of the Tartars, whom their fear and ignorance were inclined to separate from the human species. Since the invasion of the Arabs in the eighth century, Europe had never been exposed to a similar calamity; and if the disciples of Mahomet would have oppressed her religion and liberty, it might be apprehended that the shepherds of Scythia would extinguish her cities, her arts, and all the institutions of civil society.' *

* In a very characteristic foot-note, a curious detail is given. 'In the year 1238, the inhabitants of Gothia (Sweden) and Frise were prevented, by their fear of the Tartars, from sending, as usual, their ships to the herring fishery on the coast of England; and, as there was no exportation, forty or fifty of these fish were sold for a shilling. It is whimsical enough that the orders of

In the hope of averting the impending calamity, Pope Gregory proclaimed a crusade against the savage idolaters, but as his relations with the Emperor Frederick II. happened just then to be the reverse of amicable, no joint action of the European Powers could be brought about, and all Eastern Europe lay at the mercy of Batou Khan. Suddenly, however, the Tatar hordes retraced their steps from the Danube to the Volga. 'The Great Khan Okkadai,' writes Colonel Yule, 'was dead in the depths of Asia, and a courier had come to recall the army from Europe.'

On the death of Oktai, or Okkadai, in 1241, the Supreme Khan, or Khakhan, of the Moghuls, personally administered the government of China, Corea, Mongolia, Manchuria, and Tibet, his usual residence being at Karakoram, until Koublai Khan removed it, A. D. 1260, to Khanbaleg, or Cambalu. His empire, however, extended far beyond even these wide bounds, and was divided into three Khanats, or lieutenancies.

The Khan of the House of Chagatai ruled over the middle portion, comprising Zungaria, part of Eastern Toorkestan, Transoxiana, and Afghanistan, with his seat of government sometimes at Almalik, on the Ili—perhaps near Old Kulja—and sometimes at Bokhara. To the Khan of the House of Toulai, or, rather, of Hoolakoo, were assigned the provinces of Persia, Georgia, Armenia, part of Asia Minor, Arabian Irak, and Khorassan, with Tabriz for their capital city. The northern or Kipchak empire fell to the Khan of the House of Joujee, and embraced part of modern Siberia, Khwarezm, the country north of the Caucasus, and a large slice of Russia. The court of this Khanat was held at Sarai on the Volga, a town created in a desert waste by Batou, and not unknown to Englishmen in the days of Chaucer:—

a Mogul Khan, who reigned on the borders of China, should have lowered the price of herrings in the English market.'

'At Sarra, in the Londe of Tartarie,
Ther dwelt a King that werreied Russie,
Through which ther died many a doughty man:
This noble King was cleped Cambuscan.'

Although the unexpected withdrawal of Batou Khan relieved the princes and peoples of Europe for a time from the mighty dread that had fallen upon them, the danger seemed rather deferred than altogether diverted. It was felt that at any moment the Tatar swarms might again spread over the western world, and mark their course with universal desolation. Gregory's successor, Pope Innocent IV., accordingly determined to send envoys, whose soft words should turn away the wrath of the Great Khan.

He despatched, in fact, two missions. For the first he selected three Franciscan Friars, of whom the one best known to fame was named John de Plano Carpini. Starting from Lyons on the 16th April, 1245, the three friars travelled through Bohemia and Silesia to Kiew, at that time the capital of Russia, where they remained till the 4th February, 1246. Shortly afterwards they fell in with the Tatar outposts, by whom they were sent on to Batou through Southern Russia, then called Comania, or the country of the Comani, or Kipchaks, of whom no traces are now discoverable in those parts. Previous to being ushered into the presence of that redoubtable chief, they were compelled to pass between two fires of purification, and then delivered the Pope's letter on bended knees. Batou appears to have received his strange visitors graciously enough, and to have forwarded them in safety to Karakoram, which they reached on the 22nd July, fifteen months after their departure from Lyons.

The Papal letter was duly presented to the Great Khan, Gayuk or Kuyuk. It purported to be written by 'Innocent, Bishop, Servant of the Servants of God, to the King and people

of the Tatars,' who were therein bidden to withhold their destroying hands, and to desist from further outrages, and especially from the persecution of Christians, who, though tolerated in Asia, had undergone terrible cruelties in Europe; not, indeed, because of their religion, but simply as conquered enemies. On the 13th November, 1246, the envoys took leave of the Great Khan, and arrived at Kiew on the 8th June, 1247, bearers of the following letter:—

'The strength of God, Kuyuk Khan, the ruler of all men, to the great Pope. You and all the Christian people who dwell in the West have sent by your messengers sure and certain letters for the purpose of making peace with us. This we have heard from them, and it is contained in your letter. Therefore, if you desire to have peace with us, you pope, emperors, all kings, all men powerful in cities, by no means delay to come to us for the purpose of concluding peace, and you will hear our answer and our will. The series of your letter contained that we ought to be baptized, and to become Christians; we briefly reply that we do not understand why we ought to do so. As to what is mentioned in your letters, that you wonder at the slaughter of men, and chiefly of Christians, especially Hungarians, Poles, and Moravians, we shortly answer that this too we do not understand. Nevertheless, lest we should seem to pass it over in silence, we think proper to reply as follows. It is because they have not obeyed the precepts of God and of Gengis Khan, and, holding bad counsel, have slain our messengers. (The Russians murdered some Tatar envoys before the battle of Kalka.) Wherefore God has ordered them to be destroyed, and has delivered them into our hands. But if God had not done it, what could man have done to man? But you, inhabitants of the West, believe that you only are Christians, and despise others; but how do you know on whom He may choose to bestow His favour? We adore God, and, in His strength,

will overwhelm the whole earth from the East to the West. But if we were not strengthened by God, what could we do?'

Very much in the same spirit was the rebuke administered by Mangou Khan to William de Rubruquis. 'The Mongols,' observed the Khakhan, 'believe there is but one God, and have an upright heart towards Him: That as He hath given to the hand many fingers, so He hath infused into the minds of men various opinions. God hath given the Scriptures to you Christians, but you observe them not. You find it not there that one of you should revile another, or that for money a man ought to deviate from justice. . . God hath given you Scriptures and you keep them not, but He hath given us Soothsayers, whose injunctions we observe, and we live in peace (with one another).'

Carpini, however, was by no means favourably impressed with the uprightness of heart claimed by the Tatar chief as the special attribute of his people. 'They speake fayre,' he says, 'in the beginning, but in conclusion they sting like scorpions. For craftie they are, and full of falsehood, circumventing all men whom they are able by their sleights.' Neither was he pleasantly affected by their superstitious objection to personal cleanliness. Their garments were never cleansed, and were worn till they rotted off. When thunder was growling in the distance it was peculiarly unlucky to wash any article whatever, as such an act was likely to dispel the rain-clouds—in other words, water was too precious to be thrown away on external applications.

Notwithstanding the bootless result of the Franciscan Mission, Pope Innocent, in 1247, despatched four Dominican Friars—Ascelin, Simon de St Quintin, Alexander, and Albert—into Persia, but with even less success than had crowned his first venture. At that time a very general belief pervaded Europe that the Tatars, if not actually orthodox Christians,

had a decided leaning towards that religion. It was known that they were not Mohammedans, neither could they be called idolaters any more than the Christians themselves, who bowed down and worshipped graven images as though they had never heard of the Fourth Commandment. De Joinville relates that while Louis IX. was detained at Nicosia in Cyprus, waiting for a fair wind, envoys arrived from the Khan of the Tatars soliciting his co-operation against the Khalif of Baghdad, and avowing themselves of the same faith as the Franks. It has been suggested that the Tatars confounded the Christians with the Bonzas of Tibet, and that the Franks in their turn took their notion of Prester John from the Dalai Lama. Be this as it may, the sainted monarch lent a credulous ear to his visitors from the far East, and sent back a return mission consisting of three Friars and two officers of his household.

A little later, or in the year 1253, Saint Louis despatched William de Rubruquis—a Fleming, whose real name was Ruysbroek—'of the order of the minorite friers, unto the East parts of the worlde,' because a report had reached his ears that Batou's son, 'the Lord Sartach,' had been converted to Christianity. The Friar, whose simple and picturesque narrative may be read in Hakluyt, and in Astley, started from Constantinople with a little present for the Tatar chief, consisting of 'pleasant fruits, muscatel wine, and delicate bisket bread,' and encountered many adventures on the road, but which, though highly amusing, are foreign to the purport of this compilation. He very soon discovered, however, that the idea of Tatar Christianity was altogether a delusion, which he largely ascribed to the proneness of the Nestorian Christians to spin out a most wonderful story from the merest trifle. When he was about to return to Europe, a Mongol officer begged him not to say that 'our master is a Christian: he is no Christian but a Mongol;' and he adds that these barbarians fancied that the

word Christian was simply the name of a tribe, or race. But the general reader will turn most readily to the Friar's quaint descriptions of the manners and customs of the Tatars.

'They have,' he says, 'in no place any settled citie to abide in, neither knowe they of the celestiall citie to come. They have divided all Scythia among themselves, which stretched from the river Danubius even unto the rising of the sunne. And every of their captaines, according to the great or small number of his people, knoweth the bounds of his pastures, and where he ought to feed his cattel winter and summer, spring and autumne. For in the winter they descend unto the warm regions southward. And in the summer they ascend unto the colde regions northward. In winter when snow lyeth upon the grounds they feede their cattel upon pastures without water, because they use snow instead of water.

'Their houses wherein they sleepe, they grounde upon a round foundation of wickers artifically wrought and compacted together: the roofe whereof consisteth (in like sorte) of wickers meeting above into one little roundell, out of which roundell ascendeth upward a necke like unto a chimney, which they cover with white felte, and oftentimes they lay morter or white earth upon the sayd felte, with the powder of bones, that it may shine white. And sometimes also they cover it with blacke felte. The sayd felte on the necke of their house they doe garnish over with beautifull varieties of pictures. Before the doore, likewise, they hang a felte curiously painted over. For they spend all their coloured felte in painting vines, trees, birds and beastes thereupon. The sayd houses they make so large that they conteine 30 foote in breadth. For measuring once the breadth between the wheele-ruts of one of their cartes, I found it to be 20 feete over; and when the house was upon the carte, it stretched over the wheeles on each side five feete at the least. I told 22 oxen in one teame, drawing an house upon a cart,

eleven in one order according to the breadth of the cart, and eleven more before them; the axle-tree of the carte was of an huge bignes like unto the mast of a ship. And a fellow stood in the doore of the house, upon the fore-stall of the carte, driving forth the oxen.

'Moreover, they make certaine four-square baskets of small slender wickers as big as great chestes: and afterward, from one side to another, they frame an hollow lidde, or cover, of such like wickers, and make a doore in the foreside thereof. And then they cover the sayd chest or little house with black felt rubbed over with tallow or sheep's milke to keep the raine from soaking through, which they decke likewise with painting or with feathers. And in such chests they put their whole houshold stuffe and treasure. Also the same chests they do strongly binde upon their carts, which are drawen with camels, to the end they may wade through rivers. Neither do they at any time take down the sayd chests from off their carts. When they take down their dwelling-houses they turne the doores always to the south: and next of all they place the carts laden with their chests, here and there, within half a stone's cast of the house: insomuch that the house standeth between two ranks of carts, as it were between two wals. The matrons make for themselves most beautiful carts, which I am not able to describe unto your majestie but by pictures onlie.

'Duke Bæatu hath sixteen wives, every one of which hath one great house besides other little houses, which they place behind the great one, being as it were chambers for their maidens to dwel in. When they take their houses from off the cartes, the principal wife placeth her court on the west frontier, and so all the rest in their order: so that the last wife dwelleth upon the east frontier: and one of the said ladies' courts is distant from another about a stone's cast. Whereupon the court of one rich Moal or Tartar will appeare like unto a great village, very

few men abiding on the same. One woman will guide 20 or 30 cartes at once, for their countries are very plaine, and they binde the cartes with camels or oxen one behind another. And there sittes a wench (*muliercula*) in the foremost carte driving the oxen, and al the residue follow on a like pace. When they chance to come at any bad passage, they let them loose and guide them over one by one: for they goe a slowe pace, as fast as a lambe or an oxe can walke.'

Here follows a picture of a Tatar interior. 'When they have taken down their houses from their carts and turned the doors southward, they place the bed of the master of the house at the north part thereof; the women's place is always on the east, that is, on the left hand of the master of the house, when sitting upon his bed with his face to the south, but the men's place is to the west, that is, to the right hand of the master. Men, when they enter into the house, never hang their quivers on the women's side. Over the master's head there is an image made of felt, which they call the master's brother, and another over the head of the mistress, which is called her brother, fastened to the wall, and a bow between both of them. There is a little lean idol which is, as it were, the guardian of the whole house. The mistress of the house places at the feet of her bed, on the right hand, the skin of a kid stuffed with wool, and near that a little image, looking towards the apartment of the women. Next the door on the woman's side there is another image, with a cow's udder, which is the guardian of the women that milk the cattle, for this is the constant employment of their women. On the other side of the door, next the men, is another image, with the udder of a mare, for the guardian of those who milk the mares.'

The chief drink of the Tatars was a fermented liquor made from mares' milk, called by Rubruquis 'Cosmos,' by Jonas Hanway 'Kumeese,' and by later writers 'Kumiz.' The

Flemish Friar found it somewhat pungent, and says that 'it biteth a man's tongue like the wine of raspes when it is drunk. After a man hath taken a draught thereof, it leaveth behind it a taste like the taste of almon milke, and goeth downe very pleasantly, intoxicating weake braines.' Another beverage is named Caracosmos, or Black Cosmos, which was reserved for the 'great lords,' and is described as 'like unto whay or white must.' The lees were given to the servants and caused them to 'sleepe exceedingly.' 'That which is thinne and cleare their masters drinke; and in very deed it is marveilous sweete and holesome liquor.' The Russian priests more truly than wisely declared that cosmos was not a drink fit for Christians, and consequently the Tatars declined to embrace a religion that forbade indulgence in their favourite liquor. The women in winter time usually drank a mixture made by pouring hot water upon curds kept in a bladder, the result being a very sour beverage.

Such as could afford it, loved to array themselves in silken stuffs, cotton cloths, and gold brocade brought from Persia, India, and Cathay, and in rich and costly skins procured from Russia and the northern regions of Asia. The house inhabited by Mangou Khan—for Okkadai, or Oktai, had set the example of abandoning the nomad tent for a settled residence—was hung with cloth of gold. 'In the midst was a Fire made of Thorns, Wormwood Roots of a great Size, and Ox-Dung. The Khan sat on a Bed, and was clad with a Robe of spotted Fur, which shined like a Seal Skin. He was of middle Stature, flat-nosed, and about 45 years old. His Wife, who was a little pretty Woman, sat by him.'

When in doubt as to what course to pursue, Mangou Khan had recourse to divination by means of the shoulder-bones of rams, and which seems to have been much on a par with our modern vulgar practice of tossing a coin in the air and crying

Heads or Tails. The Khan, we are told, would call for three bones, and, holding them in his hands, would inwardly formulate his dilemma. The bones were then taken away and put into a fire, and when quite black were brought back to him. If one were cleft lengthwise, the sign was affirmative; if one were cleft across, or if round pieces had flown off, the answer was held to be negative; but it is not stated how the response was to be read should both these events occur.

Apparently under the impression that a benediction can do no harm, if it does no good, Mangou Khan, when drinking, allowed the Nestorian priests to wave incense towards his cup and pronounce a blessing on its contents. The rumoured toleration and munificence of the Tatar chief drew to his court at Karakoram adventurers from all parts of the world. Rubruquis particularly mentions a Norman Bishop, a French lady from Metz with her Russian husband, several Hungarians, Greeks, Russians, Georgians, and Armenians, and a goldsmith from Paris, who had executed for the Khakhan a silver tree supported by four lions of the same precious metal, and ejecting four different kinds of liquor. There was also a colony of Germans, carried off as captives by Batou Khan, settled on the Jaxartes, or Syr Darya, and employed as miners.

The gradual decline of the Tatars from their original simplicity, and their attainment to a certain degree of barbaric splendour, have been described by Gibbon with his usual felicity of diction. 'On the banks of the Onon and Selinga, the royal or *golden horde* exhibited the contrast of simplicity and greatness; of the roasted sheep and mares' milk which composed their banquets; and of a distribution in one day of five hundred waggons of gold and silver. The ambassadors and princes of Europe and Asia were compelled to undertake this distant and laborious pilgrimage; and the life and reign of the great dukes of Russia, the kings of Georgia and Armenia, the sultans of

Iconium and the Emirs of Persia, were decided by the frown or smile of the great Khan. The sons and grandsons of Zingis had been accustomed to the pastoral life; but the village of Caracorum (about 600 miles to the north-west of Pekin) was gradually ennobled by their election and residence.

'A change of manners is implied in the removal of Octai and Mangou from a tent to a house; and their example was imitated by the princes of their family and the great officers of their empire. Instead of the boundless forest (?), the enclosure of a park afforded the more indolent pleasures of the chase: their new habitations were decorated with painting and sculpture; their superfluous treasures were cast in fountains and basins, and statues of massy silver; and the artists of China and Paris vied with each other in the service of the great Khan. Caracorum contained two streets, the one of Chinese mechanics, the other of Mohammedan traders; and the places of religious worship, one Nestorian church, two moschs, and twelve temples of various idols, may represent in some degree the number and division of inhabitants. Yet a French missionary declares that the town of St Denys, near Paris, was more considerable than the Tatar capital; and that the whole palace of Mangou was scarcely equal to a tenth part of that Benedictine Abbey.'

CHAPTER V.

THE TATARS.

KING HAITON I. OF ARMENIA—CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN MOGHUL AND CHRISTIAN PRINCES—LETTERS OF EDWARD II. TO THE KING OF THE TATARS—LETTER FROM PRESTER JOHN TO ALEXIUS COMNENUS—VARIOUS ACCOUNTS OF PRESTER JOHN—NESTORIUS—REVIVAL OF MOHAMMEDANISM—BIRTH OF TIMOUR—HIS EARLY LIFE AND ADVENTURES—RAISED TO THE THRONE—HIS CONQUESTS—SHEEAHS AND SOONEES—THE TWELVE IMAMS—DEFEAT OF BAYAZID—RETURN OF TIMOUR TO SAMARKAND.

THE prevalent belief in Europe as to the Christianity of the Tatars may have been partly attributable to the letters addressed to the King and Queen of Cyprus by the Constable of Armenia, who wrote from Saurequant, conjectured by Colonel Yule to be a misprint for Samrequant, or Samarkand. In 1246, or thereabout, Hetoum or Hayton I., King of Little Armenia, deeming it prudent to place himself under the protection of the Great Khan, deputed his brother Sempad, or Sinibald, the constable of his tiny kingdom, to congratulate Kuyuk Khan on his accession to the power and dignity of the 'Cham of Tatarie.' The ambassador appears to have corresponded with their Cyprian Majesties, and to have furnished them with information of a novel as well as interesting character. Among other curious matters he states that the Three Kings who made their offerings to the Saviour in the manger came from Tanchat, or Tangut, and carried back with them to their distant homes on the borders of China the chief articles of the Christian faith.

Some years later King Hayton repaired in person to the court of Mangou Khan, successor to Kuyuk, — first of all

visiting the camp of the Tatar General at Kars. Thence the royal traveller proceeded through Armenia Proper and, traversing the Derbend Pass, at length arrived at Sarai on the Volga. Here he made the acquaintance of Batou Khan and his son Sartach, both of whom he declared to be Christians. Resuming his journey on the 13th May, 1254, he reached Karakoram in the early part of September, and was welcomed with profuse hospitality. On the 1st November the Armenian started on his homeward journey, travelling in safety by way of Zungaria, Otrar, Samarkand, Bokhara, Khorassan, Mazanderan, and Tabriz.

Towards the close of the 13th and in the beginning of the 14th century, diplomatic communications were more than once opened between Christian Powers and the Moghul Khans of Persia. The initiative seems to have been taken by the latter, who, with the diminution of their martial spirit, had laid aside their insolence of tone and manner, and were only solicitous to obtain assistance from the Franks in their wars with the Sultan of Egypt. According to Colonel Yule, two of these supplicatory letters are still preserved among the French archives. The earlier is from Argun Khan, and came in 1289. It is written in Uigur characters in the Mongol language, on a roll of cotton paper six feet and a half long by ten inches wide. The seal is thrice impressed on the face of the letter in red. It is five inches and a half square, containing six characters: 'Seal of the Minister of State, Pacificator of Nations.' The second letter is from Khodabandah, otherwise called Oljaitu, and written in 1305. The seal in this case contains the words: 'By a supreme decree the Seal of the Descendant of the Emperor, charged to reduce to obedience the ten thousand barbarous nations.'

A duplicate was probably sent to Edward II. of England, whose reply, dated from Northampton, 16th October, 1307, will

be found in Rymer's Fœdera. It is addressed 'Ad Regem Tartarorum,' and begins, 'Excellentissimo Principi, Domino Dolgieto, Regi Tartarorum illustri.' After mentioning the arrival of the Tatar envoys and the receipt of the letters intended for his royal father, who had shortly before departed this life, Edward acknowledges the friendly and affectionate relations that had always existed between the ancestors of the Tatar prince and his own, and reciprocates the wish that they may continue and grow still closer. He further expresses his great gratification on learning that the Khan had succeeded, 'Deo propitio,' in establishing peace 'ab ortu solis usque ad confinia ultra mare,' and trusts that in a short time, 'mediante Deo præsidio,' he also will be able to suppress all discord and controversy, and introduce tranquillity and concord throughout his dominions.

On the 30th November of the same year, Edward wrote a second letter, 'Ad Imperatorem Tartarorum,' and this time 'de Hærese Mahometanâ extirpandâ.' Premising that it is the duty of kings and princes to defend the believers in Christ, to overthrow mischievous and perfidious peoples, and to destroy all unbelievers and rebels against Christ, he goes on to say that were it not for the great distance and because of the hinderance of his own affairs, he would gladly apply himself 'ad tam nephandæ sectæ eradicationem'—which is described as the 'prophana secta et sordida Mahometi, circumquaque pululans et diffundens sua infecta germina.' The time for such action had arrived, for the very books of these nefarious heretics prophesied that within a brief period their sect would cease and be annihilated. The English monarch therefore urges the Tatar prince to persevere in the good work he had begun, and not to rest till he had wholly swept away that 'sectam sordidam.' And for his own part he proposes to send some honourable, learned, and pious men, who shall convert the Tatars

themselves to Christianity, and rouse them to wage war to the bitter end, 'contra detestabilem Mahometi sectam.'

The influence of the Chaldæan, or Nestorian, Christians under the early Arab conquerors, and down to the conquest of Baghdad by Hoolakoo Khan in the 13th century, is clearly set forth in Layard's 'Nineveh.' Their missionaries had penetrated into the very heart of the Moghul Empire, and boasted of making converts of several Tatar Chiefs, notably of one whom they styled Prester or Presbyter John. A very singular letter addressed to Alexius Comnenus has been ascribed to this fabled prince, but Mr Layard reasonably suspects that it was the handiwork either of a Chaldæan missionary, or of some imaginative ecclesiastic who had visited the East.

It commences in this strain: 'Prester John, by the Grace of God and of our Lord Jesus Christ, the king of kings, to Alexius Comnenus, the Governor of Constantinople, health and a happy end.' After inquiring if Alexius were acquainted with the true faith, the writer extols his own greatness and excellence. He calls himself a 'devout Christian,' and declares that he had made a vow to rescue with a great army 'the sepulchre of our Lord' from the infidels. 'Our magnificence,' he continues, 'ruleth over the Three Indies, and our territories stretch beyond the furthermost India, in which resteth the body of the blessed Apostle Thomas.' 'Seventy-two provinces obey us, a few of which are Christian provinces, and each hath its own king. And all their kings are our tributaries. In our territories are found elephants, dromedaries, and camels, and almost every kind of beast that is under heaven. Our dominions flow with milk and honey. In one portion of our territories no poisons can harm; in another grow all kinds of pepper; and a third is so thick with groves that it resembleth a forest, and is full of serpents in every part. There is also a sandy sea without water. Three days' journey from this sea, there are

mountains from which descend rivers of stones'—evidently, alluding to glaciers and moraines. Beyond a certain river dwelt the Ten Tribes, and also Salamanders. 'These worms,' it is written, 'can only live in fire, and make a skin around them as the silkworm.' Their cocoons were spun by ladies and woven into cloth, which could only be cleansed in a bright fire.

In war time the army was preceded by thirteen great crosses of gold, ornamented with gems. On ordinary occasions Prester John was content with a simple cross, and a vase filled with gold pieces. Once a year he made a pilgrimage to the tomb of the prophet Daniel in Babylon. His palace was fire-proof, was built of ebony and shittim woods, and was full of marvellous objects. His bed was made of sapphire, and he possessed 'most beautiful wives,' but, unfortunately, their number is not mentioned. Thirty thousand persons, exclusive of casual guests, were fed daily at his charge, while he himself was served by seven kings, sixty-five dukes, and three hundred and sixty-five counts. On his right hand there sat every day at dinner twelve archbishops, and on his left twenty bishops, in addition to the Patriarch of St Thomas, the Protopapas of Salmas, and the Archiprotopapas of Susa. The abbots who officiated in his private chapel were of the same number as the days in the year. His butler was a primate and also a king: his steward, an archbishop and a king; his chamberlain, a bishop and a king; his mareschal, an archimandrite and a king; and his head cook, an abbot and a king. 'But,' the veracious writer modestly remarks, 'we assume an inferior rank, and a more humble name, that we may prove our great humility.'

In the *Edinburgh Review* for January, 1872, it is pointed out that the Prester John of William de Rubruquis was a different person from the Prester John of Marco Polo—the one being Kushlouk, the Naiman, and the other Ouang Khan, the Kerait, both of them contemporaries of Chinghiz; while the genuine

Presbyter was Gour Khan, the Kara Khitayan, who certainly never professed Christianity, but whose name, softened to Your Khan, was confounded by the Syrian priests with Juchanan, or Johannes.

Describing the progress of the Nestorians under the Moghul Empire, Gibbon remarks that they 'overleaped the limits which had confined the ambition and curiosity both of the Greeks and Persians. The missionaries of Balch and Samarkand pursued without fear the footsteps of the roving Tatar, and insinuated themselves into the camps and villages of Imaus and the banks of the Selinga. They exposed a metaphysical creed to those illiterate shepherds; to those sanguinary warriors they recommended humanity and repose. Yet a Khan, whose power they vainly magnified, is said to have received at their hands the rites of baptism, and even of ordination; and the famous *Prester* or *Presbyter* John has long amused the credulity of Europe. The royal convert was indulged in the use of a portable altar; but he despatched an embassy to the Patriarch to inquire how, in the season of Lent, he should abstain from animal food, and how he might celebrate the Eucharist in a desert that produced neither corn nor wine.'

Colonel Yule explains the myth in his usual clear and explicit manner. A Syrian Bishop of Gabala who had been despatched about the middle of the 12th century by the king of Armenia to Pope Eugene III., informed that Pontiff that in the far East a Nestorian king and priest named John, who was descended from one of the Three Wise Men, had taken Ecbatana from the king of Persia and was on the march to the deliverance of Jerusalem, when his progress was stopped by the Tigris. From this source sprang the ridiculous stories about Prester John and his wide-spread dominions. In reality this mythical personage was simply the Headman of a pastoral tribe of Nestorian Christians, whose pastures were a mountain-side. On

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the overthrow of the Leao dynasty of China, early in the 12th century, one of those fugitive princes escaped to the Uigurs, and with the aid of other western tribes made himself master of Toorkestan. He thereupon assumed the title of Gour Khan, or Universal Lord, and established the Buddhist religion in this new Empire of Kara Khitai. His dynasty was short-lived, for his grandson was dethroned by his son-in-law, the last Khan of the Christian Naimans who had fled to him for refuge. The usurper adopted Buddhism, and was slain by Chinghiz Khan amid the mountains of Badakhshan.

'Nestorius, a native of Germanicia and a monk of Antioch, was recommended,' says Gibbon 'by the austerity of his life and the eloquence of his sermons.' He wielded, however, the sword of persecution with such ferocity that he disgusted the moderate and alarmed the timid. Theodosius appointed him Patriarch of Constantinople. 'In the Syrian school Nestorius had been taught to abhor the confusion of the two natures, and nicely to discriminate the humanity of his *master* Christ from the divinity of the *Lord* Jesus. The Blessed Virgin he revered as the mother of Christ, but his ears were offended with the rash and recent title of Mother of God, which had been insensibly adopted since the origin of the Arian controversy . . In his calmer moments Nestorius confessed that it (the title θεοτοκος, Deipara) might be tolerated, or excused, by the union of the two natures and the communication of their *idioms*: but he was exasperated, by contradiction, to disclaim the worship of a newborn, an infant Deity, to draw his inadequate similes from the conjugal or civil partnerships of life, and to describe the manhood of Christ as the robe, the instrument, the tabernacle of his Godhead.'

The violent opposition of Cyril, Patriarch of Alexandria, caused the outbreak of serious riots, and produced many scenes scandalous to the Church, and in the end Nestorius, condemned

by the First Council of Ephesus, abdicated his see, A. D. 435. After enduring much subsequent persecution, he died in Egypt, A. D. 451, but his heresy, though banished from the Roman Empire, found support and encouragement in Persia, where his exiled adherents were welcomed as 'victims and enemies of the tyrant'—Justinian.

'The ecclesiastical institutions of the Nestorian Christians,' the historian continues, 'were distinguished by a liberal principle of reason, or at least of policy: the austerity of the cloister was relaxed, and gradually forgotten; houses of charity were endowed for the education of orphans and foundlings; the law of celibacy, so forcibly recommended to the Greeks and Latins, was disregarded by the Persian clergy; and the number of the elect was multiplied by the public and reiterated nuptials of the priests, the bishops, and even the patriarch himself. To this standard of natural and religious freedom, myriads of fugitives resorted from all the provinces of the Eastern Empire; the narrow bigotry of Justinian was punished by the emigration of his most industrious subjects; they transported into Persia the arts both of peace and war; and those who deserved the favour, were promoted in the service of a discerning monarch' (Nousheerwan).

Christianity had penetrated into Khorassan and Bactria at a very early period, and in the sixth century a Metropolitan see was established at Samarkand. It was from Samarkand that the Chaldæan Patriarch obtained his information regarding the progress of the Northern Tatar hordes, and startled the Khalif and his courtiers by reading aloud in open divan a letter addressed to him by the Archbishop of that distant see. 'A people numerous as the locust-cloud had burst from the mountains between Thibet and Khotan, and were pouring down upon the fertile plains of Kashgar. They were commanded by seven kings, each at the head of 70,000 horsemen. The war-

riors were as swarthy as Indians. They used no water in their ablutions; nor did they cut their hair. They were most skilful archers, and were content with simple and frugal fare. Their horses were fed upon meat.' This last statement, however, was too much for the credulity of the audience, until one who had travelled into foreign parts, averred, from his personal observations, that in Arabia both raw meat and fried fish were given to horses.

Under the Moghul Empire it was not an uncommon thing for Tatar chiefs to take to themselves Christian wives, who were permitted to bring up their children in their own faith, and one of the numerous wives of Chinghiz himself is said to have been a Nestorian heretic. In the early part of the 14th century, no fewer than twenty-five Archbishops recognized the Patriarch of Babylon as the Head of the Eastern Church, and those who were too remote to give a personal account of their stewardship, sent in a written report every sixth year. As the Metropolitan sees were placed at such distant points as Merv, Herat, Seistan, Balkh, Samarkand, Kashgar, and Almalik, and as the Patriarch himself was at one time at Selucia, at another at Ctesiphan, and at yet another at Baghdad, it is evident that his supervision must have been rather nominal than real and practical. For all that, Mosheim attests that 'to the lasting honour of the Nestorian sect, they, of all the Christian societies established in the East, have preserved themselves most free from the numberless superstitions which have found their way into the Greek and Latin Churches.'

After the downfall of the Khalifat, the Chaldæans, as they have since been called, were cruelly persecuted by the Tatars, greatly at the instigation of the Romanist missionaries. Their churches were utterly destroyed by Timour Lung, who put to the sword, regardless of age or sex, all who were unable to escape into the mountains of Koordistan. Save only in that

wild and barbarous region few traces of the Nestorian churches have survived since the commencement of the 15th century, —the modern Assyrians, or Chaldæans, repudiating all connection with the Nestorian heresy.

According to Mr Layard, they deny the intermediate state of purgatory, neither do they worship the Virgin Mary. The Cross, indeed, is set up in their churches, and they sign themselves by the figure of faith, but this is to be understood merely as a token of religious brotherhood. The doctrine of transubstantiation they reject altogether, and the practice of auricular confession has fallen into desuetude. The clergy are divided into eight grades, of which the five lower are permitted to marry. One hundred and fifty-two days are set apart in every year, on which abstinence from animal food is rigidly enjoined, and the religious day, whether as regards fasts or festivals, is measured from sunset to sunset. The Patriarch lives solely on milk and vegetables, and can be chosen only from one family, and his name is always Shamoun, or Simon.

At different times, indeed, in the fourteenth century, Romanist Friars succeeded in reaching China, or Cathay, after traversing the deserts and oases of Central Asia, but it was with fear and trembling; and in 1339, William of Modena, a merchant, died for the faith that was in him, in company with certain friars, at Almalik on the Ili. Shortly afterwards both missionaries and merchants disappeared from the scene. Friars, and even bishops, were despatched from Avignon, but, as Colonel Yule expresses it, 'they go forth into the darkness and are heard of no more. . . Islam has recovered its ground, and extended its grasp over Middle Asia, and the Nestorian Christianity, which once prevailed there, is rapidly vanishing, and leaving its traces only in some strange parodies of church ritual, which are found twined into the worship of Tibetan Lamas, like the cabin gildings and mir-

rors of a wrecked vessel adorning the hut of a Polynesian chief.'

The power and glory of the dynasty of Chinghiz passed away on the death of his grandson Koublai Khan, brother and successor to Mangou Khan, and whose name is familiar to all readers of the quaint narrative of Marco Polo. Meanwhile a Toorkoman horde had laid the foundation of the Ottoman Empire, by the reduction of Prusa and the subjugation of Bithynia to the shores of the Hellespont. The faith of Islam had revived throughout Mawaralnahr, and a legend tells how Toghlouk Timour Khan, the ruler of Badakhshan and Kashgar, was brought to see the errors of a deism obscured by idolatry.

This prince, a lineal descendant of Chagatai, succeeded to the Khanat of Kashgar in 1348, when he was only in his eighteenth year. One day, while enjoying the pleasures of the chase, he was much annoyed by the intrusion of a party of strangers, whom he supposed to be Tajeeks, or members of an almost aboriginal race, and accordingly ordered them to be brought before him bound hand and foot. Heaping upon the prisoners much coarse and violent abuse, he assured them that he valued a Tajeek no more than a dog. Sheikh Samoul-ood-deen, the chief man of the offending party, answered that he and his companions were true believers from Kuttack, and by no means to be treated as unclean animals.

Struck by his bold spirit and bearing, Toghlouk ordered him to be kept in close custody until his return from the hunt, when he held much earnest conference with the Sheikh, and became convinced of the truth of the Mohammedan religion. He was not, however, sufficiently secure of his position to avow his conversion, and was constrained to content himself with setting the strangers at liberty. After a time the Sheikh was gathered to his fathers, but not until, with his dying breath, he had enjoined his son Rasheed-ood-deen to complete the work he had himself begun.

Failing in every attempt to obtain a private audience, Rasheed one morning ascended a mound immediately beneath the prince's windows, and intoned his devotional exercises in so loud a voice that he disturbed the royal slumbers. He was accordingly seized and led before the Khan, to whom he announced the mission he had received from his father, and spoke with such earnest eloquence that all who heard him resolved instantly to become followers of the prophet. One alone held out and refused to change his religion, unless the Sheikh succeeded in throwing to the ground the most famous wrestler in Kashgar. The Khan at first refused to suffer such a test to be applied, until he was over-ruled by the Sheikh himself, who expressed his readiness to encounter the athlete. As soon as these strange combatants were placed face to face, the Sheikh dealt his antagonist a tremendous blow on the stomach, and laid him breathless at his feet. Such an argument was irresistible. The prostrate wrestler was the first to profess his faith in Allah, and in Mohammed the prophet of Allah, and his example was eagerly followed by the Khan and all the courtiers.

This Chief subsequently laid claim to the whole of Mawaralnahr, by virtue of his descent from Chagatai, and experienced little difficulty in enforcing his pretensions. The governor of the province, whose chief city was Kesh, fled to Khorassan, but his nephew boldly repaired to the Khan's camp, and so thoroughly ingratiated himself in that prince's favour, that he was appointed successor to his fugitive uncle. The nephew was Timour Lung, commonly called Timour Beg, or Timour the Tatar.

Fortunate in most things, Chagatai had the further good fortune to possess a Prime Minister of remarkable ability and great worth of character, on whom he bestowed his daughter in marriage. Karachar Nuyan—so was he called—belonged to the tribe of Berlas, which he induced to settle in the immediate

neighbourhood of Kesh, a town situated about thirty miles to the south of Samarkand. His grandson Taragai, or Tourghai, resigned the hereditary office of Commander-in-chief of the forces of Mawaralnahr, and devoted himself to the duties of a pastoral and patriarchal life. This wise and unambitious man is represented as being distinguished for his learning and liberality, as well as for his great wealth in sheep and goats, cattle and servants. His chief treasure, however, was his beautiful and virtuous wife, Tekina Khatoum, who, on the 8th April, 1336, made him the happy father of a man-child. This excellent couple,—whose residence was in a suburban village, almost contiguous to Kesh, appropriately named Shuhr-i-Subz, or the City of Verdure,—carried the infant to the pious Sheikh Shems-ood-deen, whom they found engaged, as usual, in the study of the Koran.

It so chanced that the Skeikh was reading the 67th chapter, and had just reached the verse wherein it is asked, 'Are you sure that He who dwelleth in Heaven will not cause the earth to swallow you up? And behold it *shall shake* (tamurou).' Turning to his visitors the holy man said, in prophetic tones, 'We have named your son Timour;' but in after life this babe enjoyed the titles of Sultan (Lord), Kamran (successful), Ameer (commander), Kootb-ood-deem (polestar of the faith), Timour (it shall shake), Kourkhan or Gourgan (son-in-law of a prince, or simply Great Lord), Sahib Keraun (master of the grand conjunctions).

When only seven years of age, the child was sent to school, and made such rapid progress that at the age of nine he was taught the daily service of the mosque, and habitually read the 91st chapter, called the Sun. Timour asserts of himself that he was barely twelve when he first became prescient of the greatness to which he was predestined, and that from that time he began to assume a dignified and even haughty deportment. He

had scarce attained his eighteenth year when he was puffed up with vanity and conceit, passing his time on horseback and in hunting, or in playing at chess—not unfrequently, however, reading the Koran. Suddenly he was seized with a fit of repentance, which caused him to renounce even the pastime of chess as too absorbing, and to vow that he would never willingly do injury to any living being. Indeed, so tender-hearted did he become, that it grieved him to tread upon an ant. This violent reformation was naturally of brief duration, for on his father presenting him in the following year with a separate establishment, his youthful ambition was rekindled, and the value of human life faded away.

Shortly afterwards he was sent by his father on a business mission to Ameer Kourgan, a powerful chief, whose favour he so completely gained, that the Ameer gave him to wife his grand-daughter Aljaz Tourkan Aga. This lady faithfully and courageously accompanied her warlike lord in his most perilous and toilsome expeditions, and cheerfully shared the dangers and privations of the early part of his career. At that time Mawaralnahr was held in thraldom by Ameer Kazan Sultan, who had hitherto succeeded in suppressing every attempt to throw off his heavy yoke. At last, however, he was defeated, made prisoner, and subsequently put to death by Ameer Kourgan, who finally overcame the opposition of the other chiefs, Timour himself intriguing against him—and assumed absolute dominion over Mawaralnahr.

In the year 1358, Timour greatly distinguished himself in a brief campaign against the Heratees, and about this time was presented by Sheikh Zyn Addeen Shady, with a cornelian engraved with the Persian phrase, *Rasty va Rousty*—Righteousness and Salvation—which he caused to be set as a seal-ring, and adopted as his motto. The Ameer next resolved upon the conquest of Khwarezm, in which he was for some time thwarted

by the shameless intrigues of his grandson-in-law. In the end, the chiefs of that country submitted themselves, and Timour's duplicity was rewarded with the district of Urghunj. Not long afterwards the Ameer was murdered, and, availing themselves of the general confusion, Timour and two other chiefs divided Mawaralnahr between them. Their authority, however, does not appear to have been generally recognized, and in 1361 no leader came forward to oppose the advance of the Jetes—or unconverted Toorks, and not to be confounded with the Getæ—under the command of Toghlouk Timour Khan.

At this crisis, Timour's uncle, the nominal governor of Kesh, sought safety in flight, and the more daring nephew was deputed to offer presents and terms of accommodation to the formidable Toghlouk. In this difficult conjuncture, Timour displayed so much courage and sagacity, that he was appointed governor of the province. But no sooner had the danger passed away than his authority was disputed, and he found himself under the necessity of applying to Toghlouk for assistance. The aid solicited was promptly afforded, but, charmed with the beauty and fertility of the country, the Jetes showed no desire to return to their own less favoured lands. As this was by no means the end Timour had in view, he began to conspire against Toghlouk, and on the discovery of his treachery was forced to flee towards Khwarezm. In his flight he was joined by his brother-in-law Ameer Hosein, who had just been expelled from Badakhshan.

The two fugitives, finding themselves at the head of seventy followers whose circumstances were as desperate as their own, marched boldly against Urghunj, but were surrounded in the desert by a body of one thousand Toorkomans. An Homeric conflict ensued, and we are invited to believe that, after killing or disabling nine hundred of their assailants, Timour, Hosein, and seven of their companions were permitted to withdraw

without further molestation. Worn out with fatigue and thirst, they at length reached a well, and were regaled by a shepherd with goat's flesh, over which they enjoyed themselves exceedingly.

Their wanderings lasted for a whole month, at the end of which they were captured by some roving Toorkomans, who confined Timour and his wife for sixty-two days in a filthy cow-house, swarming with vermin. From this loathsome duress, Timour's courage and patient endurance ultimately wrought their deliverance, though his troubles were yet far from being ended. For many months he roamed to and fro over the wilderness, at one time gathering together adherents, and at another reduced to the verge of starvation. His moral nature, however, gained strength in the school of adversity, and his long career of triumph was made easier by his terrible experiences in the deserts of Khwarezm and Mawaralnahr. In touching language, he relates how he was recognized by three chiefs at the head of a party of seventy horsemen, who had gone forth in search of him. 'When their eyes fell upon me,' he writes, 'they were overwhelmed with joy, and they alighted from their horses, and they came and bent their knees, and they kissed my stirrup. I also came down from my horse, and took each of them in my arms. And I put my turban on the head of one chief, and my girdle, rich in jewels and wrought with gold, I bound on the loins of another; and the third I clothed in my own coat. And they wept, and I wept also: and the hour of prayer had arrived, and we prayed with tranquil minds. We then mounted and came to my encampment, where we remained for some time: I assembled my principal people and gave a feast, and, having killed a quantity of game, we had abundance of meat, for which we returned thanks to God.'

For seven years Timour contended with varying fortune against the Jetes and Toorkomans. In Seistan he sustained a

terrible defeat, and was severely wounded in the arm and foot, and lamed for life. From this misadventure he acquired the posthumous epithet of Timour-'lene,' or 'lung'—the lame Timour—which was first applied to him about the middle of the 15th century, by his Syrian biographer Ahmed Ben Arabshah, who hated and maligned him as much as he was praised and flattered by Sheref-ood-deen Ali, of Yezd.

By 1362 Timour had collected a body of 3000 horsemen, with whom he defeated an army of 20,000 Jetes, and in the following year, with 6000 men, routed 30,000 of the enemy, commanded by Toghlouk's son Alyas Khwajeh. This incompetent prince succeeded his father, but could not prevent the victorious Timour from entering Samarkand. Shortly afterwards the Jetes again crossed the Syhoon or Syr, and only escaped annihilation through the jealousy of Timour's brother-in-law, Ameer Hosein. Between these two kinsmen there ensued a long and deadly struggle, which ended in the discomfiture and death of the latter.

All obstacles being now removed out of his path, Timour was placed on the throne in the city of Balkh—A. D. 1369, and in the 34th year of his age—by four of the most revered Syuds, and all the people held up their hands and prayed for his prosperity. Thence he marched to Samarkand, which he made his capital, though for many years he affected to govern by the title of Ameer, and as the vicegerent of Sultan Mohammed Khan, the lineal descendant of Chagatai, but who was nothing more than a submissive pageant.

The next few years were devoted by Timour to the consolidation of his authority, the establishment of order, the organization of the army, and the extirpation of idolatry and Christianity. Then returned the old dreams of conquest and empire, veiled under the thin pretence of promoting the welfare of foreign lands and their peoples. Accordingly, in 1378, he

over-ran Khwarezm, sacked and destroyed Urghunj, and removed the inhabitants to Kesh. He next subdued Khorassan and Mazanderan, Azerbijan and Georgia—Candahar and Seistan being soon afterwards added to his dominions. In 1387 Ispahan received the conqueror within its walls, but in the night, some of his barbarians being slain in a riot, a general massacre ensued. He thence proceeded to Shiraz, and summoning to his presence the poet Hafiz, asked him how he dared to dispose of his two finest cities, Samarkand and Bokhara, which he had said, in a well-known couplet, he would give for the mole on the cheek of his mistress. 'Can the gifts of Hafiz ever impoverish Timour?' was the happy reply, rewarded by munificent largesses. Many anecdotes, indeed, are related of Timour's occasional affability and kindliness of nature, which prove no more than that he was not a 'perfect monster,' but at times subject to capricious impulses that could be gratified without pain to his fellow-men.

From Shiraz the path of victory led to the Persian Gulf, to Ormuz and to Baghdad, and 'the whole course of the Tigris and Euphrates, from the mouth to the sources of those rivers, was reduced to his obedience.' Crossing the Syr Darya at Khojend, he passed the latter part of 1390 at Tashkend, where he was attacked by a serious illness. He was again in the field, however, at the commencement of 1391, and marched for three weeks across the steppes to the north of the Aral. Sometime in May he reached the western bank of the Yaik or Ural river, and was suddenly confronted by the countless horsemen of the Kipchak hordes. The struggle was fierce and protracted, but in the end the fortune of Timour turned the scale, and the enemy broke and fled in every direction.

Delighted with the verdure of the soil, and the abundance of game, Timour lingered on the banks of the Volga till the month of July, when he once more set his face to the eastward,

and entered Samarkand at the close of the year, bringing in his train immense flocks and herds of sheep, cattle, horses, and camels, with troops of prisoners. But, though defeated, the Kipchaks were by no means subdued. Barely three years elapsed before Tokatmish, or Toktamish, rushed down through the Gates of Derbend in the hope of cutting off Timour's army while entangled in the mountains of Georgia. This time the Kipchaks were overthrown with still greater slaughter than in the former campaign, and their prince fled to Siberia. All Muscovy was over-run to the banks of the Dnieper, and the inhabitants of Moscow only deemed themselves safe when the news arrived that the eastern barbarians had recrossed the Caucasus. On a plain in Georgia the victorious army held high festival, nor was it until 1396 that it again drank of the waters of the Zarafshan.

'Superb mosques and palaces,' says Mr Clements Markham, 'were built at Samarkand and Kesh, gardens were laid out full of fragrant flowers, marble was transported from Azerbijan, and porcelain to adorn the chambers from the distant empire of China.' The two years thus devoted to the arts of peace were followed by the subjugation of the Punjab and Hindostan, the massacre of the inhabitants of Delhi, and the foundation of the Moghul Empire in India.

On his return to Samarkand in 1399, Timour commenced the erection of a magnificent mosque, whose vaulted roof was sustained by 480 columns of hewn stone. The doors were of brass, while the walls were decorated with inscriptions in relief. At each of the four corners rose a lofty minaret, but the daily spectacle of ninety Indian elephants, employed in transporting stone from the quarries, may be supposed to have impressed his subjects with greater awe and admiration than the architectural wonders they were not yet qualified to appreciate.

Neither did Timour himself indulge for more than a few

months in repose from war and bloodshed. The first year of the 15th century beheld him in the plains of Syria, and the possession of Aleppo crowned one of the greatest victories he had yet achieved. Inviting the doctors of the law to a personal conference, Timour discussed with them various religious problems of a delicate nature, and insisted upon his own aversion from war and love of clemency, while—in the words of Gibbon —'the streets of Aleppo streamed with blood, and re-echoed with the cries of mothers and children, with the shrieks of violated virgins. The rich plunder that was abandoned to his soldiers might stimulate their avarice, but the cruelty was enforced by the peremptory command of producing an adequate number of heads, which, according to his custom, were curiously piled in columns and pyramids: the Moguls celebrated the feast of victory, while the surviving Moslems passed the night in tears and in chains.'

From Aleppo, Timour marched against Damascus, and narrowly escaped a defeat by an army from Egypt. Damascus fell into his hands from the foolish confidence placed in his honour by the inhabitants, who fondly imagined that the Moghul would respect the truce demanded by himself. His perfidy he sought to justify as caused by the duty of avenging the death of Hosein, the grandson of Mohammed. 'A family which had given honourable burial to the head of Hosein, and a colony of artificers whom he sent to labour at Samarkand, were alone reserved in the general massacre; and, after a period of seven centuries, Damascus was reduced to ashes, because a Tatar was moved by religious zeal to avenge the blood of an Arab.' The massacre of the citizens of Damascus makes a prominent figure in Marlow's bombastic drama entitled 'Tamburlaine the Greate, who, from the state of a Shepheard in Scythia, by his rare and wonderful conquests, became a most puissant and mighty Monarge.'

Timour's ferocity seems in this instance to have been aggravated by fanaticism. He had espoused the traditions of the Sheeahs, or Schismatics, who repudiate the first three successors of Mohammed recognized by the Soonees, or orthodox Moslemin. The former are now confined to the Persians and a considerable minority of the Mussulman population of India, while the latter comprise the entire Mohammedan community, with those two exceptions. The schism of the Sheeahs arose in this way. On the death of the Prophet, the rightful successor would have been Abou Taleb's son Ali, the husband of his daughter Fatima. Aboubekr's daughter, Ayestha, the Prophet's widow, was, however, the deadly enemy of Ali, whose lofty spirit and independent bearing were, besides, distasteful to the Koreish, jealous rivals of the tribe of Hashem to which he belonged. Mohammed dying without naming a successor, Aboubekr was chosen to rule in his stead. Two years later, Aboubekr, on his death-bed, bequeathed his power to Omar, who fell by the hand of an assassin, but not before he had expressed his wish that the choice of a successor should be left to the six surviving 'Companions' of the Prophet. These elected Othman, Mohammed's secretary, and it was not until his death, or twenty-four years after that of the Prophet, that Ali was permitted to ascend the throne. The Sheeahs hold that his three predecessors were usurpers, and no true Persian will bear the name of Aboubekr, Omar, or Othman.

The pathetic fate of Ali's sons Hassan and Hosein is familiar to all readers of Gibbon, and to the present day the anniversary of Hosein's death, on the plain of Kerbela, gives rise to the most extravagant demonstrations of grief and fury. Ali, his two sons, and Hosein's lineal descendants to the ninth generation, constitute the Twelve Imams, of whom two are still specially revered by the Persians. These were Ali Reza, the eighth Imam, sometimes called Morteza, or, The Approved,

who died at Tous, A. D. 818, as some affirm, poisoned by the orders of Haroun Al Rasheed. He was buried at Meshed, and a magnificent tomb erected over his remains, which is still visited by numerous pilgrims. Even the great Shah Abbas once proceeded to Meshed on foot from Ispahan, in order to offer up his devotions at this tomb, an achievement that can only be appreciated by those who understand the antipathy of every Oriental to any sort of pedestrian exercise. Even more famous was the twelfth and last of the Imams, Abou'lkazem Mohammed Mehdi, who mysteriously disappeared, A. D. 879, and is believed to have been, like Enoch, translated to Paradise without passing through the intermediate stage of dissolution.

Though originally separating upon a point of political rather than doctrinal importance, the Sheeahs and Soonees still detest each other with intense, implacable hatred. The former have been driven by their comparative weakness to arrant hypocrisy, and in the presence of their enemies, when in superior force, will dissemble their sectarianism, and affect to be orthodox. This dissimulation, according to Dr Wolff, is enjoined as a duty, and goes by the name of Takeeah. They are also less rigid than the Soonees in moral observances, and indulge in wine with little reservation or disguise. In prayer their arms hang down by their sides, instead of being crossed on their breast. They also wear green slippers, and a turban of a particular shape, and practise various other petty distinctions, cleverly ridiculed in Moore's 'Twopenny Post Bag,' Letter VI. Though generally known as Sheeahs, they prefer to be called Adaleeahs, or Followers of Justice, but are regarded by the Soonees as worse even than Christians, while the Toorkomans, in selling them as slaves, deny that they transgress the Koran, which prohibits true Believers from reducing their brethren to servitude.

Timour's crowning victory was now at hand. On the 28th July, 1402, he encountered with a far greater force, the im-

mense army of Sultan Bayazid, or Bajazet, in the plains round the city of Angora, and gained a complete victory. After displaying, in vain, both military skill and personal valour, Bayazid beheld the irremediable rout of his 400,000 trained warriors, and was himself taken prisoner while fleeing from the fatal field. Timour's grandson, Meerza Mohammed Sooltan, with a chosen body of horse, followed up this brilliant success. Boursa was pillaged and burnt to the ground, 'and the Mogul squadrons were only stopped by the waves of the Propontis.' Smyrna was taken by Timour himself after a gallant resistance, and 'all that breathed were put to the sword.'

There seems no reason to doubt that the captive Sultan was at first treated with the consideration due to his exalted rank and pitiable reverse of fortune. It is more than probable that he would even have been restored to power had he borne himself with less arrogance, and abstained from idle attempts to escape from confinement. To destroy all hope of immediate deliverance, and to facilitate his conveyance to Samarkand, Timour placed his royal captive on a Moghul cart fenced round with iron bars, but the sense of humiliation and disappointment speedily released the unhappy Sultan from the shame and misery of his situation. Within nine months after the overthrow of his empire at Angora, Bayazid was carried off by an apoplectic stroke at Akshuhr—White Town—in Anatolia, and his body was interred with royal honours in the Mausoleum built by himself at Boursa.

His eldest son Soliman was confirmed in his government of Roumania, while a patent in red ink bestowed upon Bayazid's younger son, Mousa, the province of Anatolia. The Byzantine emperor now avowed allegiance to the victorious Tatar, and engaged to pay an annual tribute in token of subjection. Finally, the Sultan of Egypt, trembling for his rich possessions, acknowledged the supremacy of the Moghul conqueror, and

sent him a peace-offering of nine ostriches and a giraffe. The winter of 1403 was passed on the banks of the Araxes, but in the following spring Timour set out on his return to Samarkand, after an absence of four years and nine months. His sovereign power now extended, at least in name, from the western boundary of China to the Mediterranean and the Hellespont, and from the northernmost extremity of the Caspian Sea to the Persian Gulf, Egypt and Hindostan being also his tributaries.

CHAPTER VI.

TIMOUR-LUNG.

MARRIAGE OF JEHANGHEER—EMBASSY OF CLAVIJO—KESH—FESTIVITIES AT SAMARKAND—TIMOUR'S MAGNIFICENCE—HARD DRINKING—DRESS OF THE KHANUM—BADAKHSHAN—BALAS RUBIES—LAPIS LAZULI—SAMARKAND—LAWS AND REGULATIONS—CLAVIJO'S JOURNEY ACROSS THE DESERT—DEATH OF TIMOUR.

On his return from his work of destruction in Western Asia, Timour entered Samarkand for the ninth time. Although on each previous occasion he had come to his capital city laden with the spoils of the conquered, never had he exhibited such magnificence, marred, though it might be, by revolting coarseness and brutality. And yet it could have been no easy matter to surpass the barbaric splendour that had shed lustre on the espousal of Timour's eldest son, Jehangheer, to the lovely princess Khan Sadah, daughter of the Khan of Khwarezm.

'The bride's outfit,' says Dr Wolff, 'consisted of rich crowns, of golden thrones, of precious armlets and ear-rings, of girdles of diamonds and pearls, of beds, tents, and palanquins. As a welcome, the grandees of the empire threw over the head of the bride gold pieces and pearls, the air was filled with the odour of ambra, the ground was covered with carpets and gold; throughout all the towns which they passed, the Sheikhs and Cadis, the Imaums and Mollahs, came out to meet them, and all these festivities were doubled on their arrival in Samarkand. The tent in which the espousal took place, represented in its interior the dome of heaven, covered with stars and sown

with diamonds. Shawls, cloths, and stuffs, were distributed among the guests, and in the nuptial chamber the astronomers placed the horoscope of the happy and lucky moment of the espousal.' They failed, however, to foresee, or at least to predict, the early death of the bridegroom, Timour's most beloved and favourite son.

Of the savage debauchery that testified to the power and wealth of the Tatar monarch on the conclusion of his Western campaigns, a picturesque description is given in Mr Markham's vigorous translation of the 'Narrative of the Embassy of Ruy Gonzalez de Clavijo to the Court of Timour at Samarkand.' The battle of Angora had been witnessed by two Spanish knights, Pelayode Sotomayor and Fernando de Palaznelos, ambassadors from Henry III. of Castile, to the formidable Timour. On their return they were accompanied by a Tatar envoy, Mohammed Al Kazi, charged to present the Spanish monarch with some costly jewels, and—as a more delicate attention—with several beautiful women, among whom were two Christian ladies found in the harem of the captive Bayazid, the one, Angelina, daughter of Count John of Hungary, the other a Greek lady named Maria.

On the 22nd May, 1403, Mohammed Al Kazi sailed from Seville for Constantinople, in company with Ruy Gonzalez de Clavijo, a knight of Madrid, Gomez de Salazar, and Fray Alonzo Paez de Santa Maria, a Master of Theology. From Europe the travellers entered Asia at Trebizond, whence they proceeded by Tabriz, Teheran, Damghan, and Nishapoor, to Meshed, where they admired the tomb of the Imam Ali Reza, which was at that time covered with silver gilt. They also observed that posting-houses were established from Khorassan to Samarkand, at some of which as many as two hundred horses were kept, while couriers were travelling to and fro day and night. In the desert, large staging stations were built and

amply stored with provisions. Ambassadors journeying to the Tatar court were empowered to impress as many horses as they required, and could take them from the greatest in the land. The old league was divided by Timour into two, at each of which was placed a small pillar to mark the road and the distance.

The melons grown in the well-watered plain between Meshed and Merv are pronounced by those envoys the finest in the world, but on this point their evidence is opposed to that of Ibn Batuta, the famous traveller and theologian from Tangiers. 'They have in Khwarezm,' he says, 'a melon to which none, except that of Bokhara, can be compared: the nearest to it is that of Ispahan. The peel of this melon is green, the interior red. It is perfectly sweet, and rather hard. Its most remarkable property is that it may be cut in oblong pieces and dried, and then put into a case, like a fig, and carried to India or China. Among dried fruits there is none superior to this.'

But, however exquisite the flavour of the melons of Khorassan, the ambassadors were painfully struck with the large proportion of women and children to men, and were informed that Timour had deported upwards of a hundred thousand males to till the lands of Samarkand, together with sheep, cattle, and asses beyond computation. The country through which they passed seemed generally well cultivated. The town of Anchoy —evidently, Andkhooee—is described as being surrounded for two leagues in every direction with gardens, vineyards, rural houses, and canals of irrigation.

Three days from the Oxus, or Amou—called by them Viadme and Biamo—they came to Vaeq—their synonym for Balkh. The town proper was girt with three walls of earth, the outermost of which was thirty paces in thickness, but nevertheless breached in many places. The space between this and the middle wall was planted with cotton, while that between the middle and

the innermost wall was partly cultivated, partly built upon.

The next place was Termit, the modern Termedh, a very large and populous city, unconfined by walls, and surrounded by gardens and streams of water. The river Oxus, or Jyhoon, was regarded by the Spaniards as 'one of the rivers which flow from Paradise,' and that view is supported by the testimony of Ibn Batuta, and of all Mussulman writers of that age. They might also boast that they were the first and the last Europeans who have ever passed through the Kohluga, or Iron Gate, and their description tallies very closely with that given by Hiouen Tsang, who traversed the defile about A. D. 630, on his way from Samarkand to Balkh.

'The journey,' writes the Buddhist pilgrim, 'was rugged and stony; the paths up the gorges ran along the verge of precipices; no village was met with, nor was there water, or any green thing. After three days' journey among these mountains in a south-west direction, the traveller entered the pass called the Iron Gate. This is a gorge between two mountains, which rise parallel to each other, right and left, to a prodigious height. Nothing divides them but the path, which is extremely narrow and precipitous. The two mountains form on either hand mighty walls of stone of an iron hue. The pass is closed by folding gates clamped with iron, and to the gates are attached a number of iron bells. From these circumstances, and from the difficulty and strength of the pass, it has got the name it bears.'

In Clavijo's time the iron gates had been removed, and the place had degenerated into a Custom House, at which merchants from India paid duty upon their goods. The road through this pass has long since been disused, caravans now preferring to turn the flank of the Karategeen mountains and travel by way of Karshee.

The level plain round Kesh, or Shuhr-i-Subz, contained

many villages with well-watered pastures, and was 'a very beautiful, bright, well-peopled country,' full of corn-fields, vineyards, cotton plantations, melon grounds, and groves of fruit-trees. The town was surrounded by a wall of earth, with a deep moat all round traversed by draw-bridges. It boasted of several mosques, and one superior to all the rest was being erected over the remains of Timour's father, and of his eldest son Jehangheer, who died in 1372, in the twentieth year of his age. 'This mosque, with its chapels, was very rich and beautifully ornamented in blue and gold, and within it there was a large court with trees and ponds of water. In this mosque the lord gives twenty boiled sheep every day, for the souls of his father and son, which lie buried here.'

There was also a magnificent palace in progress, which had been commenced twenty years previously and was not yet finished. It was entered by a long gallery with a lofty gateway, and on each side were small open recesses, paved and lined with glazed tiles arranged in pleasing patterns. These were the rooms in which the attendants waited. Over the doorway of the reception hall was placed the figure of a lion and the sun—the arms of Persia—whence Clavijo infers that this portion of the building must have been erected previous to the reign of Timour, whose emblem was three noughts or circles, two above and one below. Many of the chambers displayed ornamental work in gold and blue and other colours, executed with wonderful taste. Especially resplendent was the apartment reserved for festal occasions and the society of his wives, which looked out upon spacious pleasure-grounds shaded by trees and cooled by fountains.

Immediately after their arrival at Samarkand the ambassadors were conducted to the royal palace situated outside the walls of the Tatar capital, and at once ushered into the presence of the 'mighty hunter before the Lord.' 'Timour was seated

in a portal, in front of the entrance of a beautiful palace; and he was sitting on the ground. Before him there was a fountain, which threw up the water very high, and in it there were some red apples. The lord was seated cross-legged, on silken embroidered carpets, amongst round pillows. He was dressed in a robe of silk, with a high hat on his head, on the top of which there was a spinal ruby, with pearls and precious stones round it.'

As soon as the ambassadors came within sight of the monarch, they bent the knee and bowed low, with their arms crossed on their breast. They then advanced a little, and repeated this act of obeisance. Coming yet a little nearer, they knelt down, and remained in that attitude until Timour graciously bade them arise and approach without fear. His eyesight was very bad, and 'the eyelids had fallen down entirely.'

At table they were placed by the master of the ceremonies below the ambassador from Cathay, but Timour called them to a higher seat, and the slighted envoy was informed that 'the lord had ordered that those who were ambassadors from the King of Spain, his son and friend, should sit above him; and that he who was the ambassador from a thief and a bad man, his enemy, should sit below them.'

'As soon as these ambassadors, and many others who had come from distant countries, were seated in order, they brought much meat, boiled, roasted, and dressed in other ways, and roasted horses; and they placed these sheep and horses on very large round pieces of stamped leather. When the lord called for meat, the people dragged it to him on these pieces of leather, so great was its weight; and as soon as it was within twenty paces of him, the carvers came, who cut it up, kneeling on the leather. They cut it in pieces, and put the pieces in basins of gold and silver, earthenware and glass, and porcelain, which is very scarce and precious. The most honourable piece was a

haunch of the horse, with the loin, but without the leg, and they placed parts of it in ten cups of gold and silver.

'They also cut up the haunches of the sheep. They then put pieces of the tripes of the horses, about the size of a man's fist, into the cups, and entire sheep's heads, and in this way they made many dishes. When they had made sufficient, they placed them in rows. Then some men came with soup, and they sprinkled salt over it and put a little into each dish as sauce; and they took some very thin cakes of corn, doubled them four times, and placed one over each cup or basin of meat. As soon as this was done, the Meerzas and courtiers of the lord took these basins, one holding each side, and one helping behind (for a single man could not lift them), and placed them before the lord and the ambassadors, and the knights, who were there; and the lord sent the ambassadors two basins from those which were placed before him as a mark of favour. When this food was taken away, more was brought; and it is the custom to take this food which is given to them, to their lodgings, and if they do not do so, it is taken as an affront; and so much of this food was brought that it was quite wonderful. . . . . .

'When the roast and boiled meats were done with, they brought meats dressed in various other ways, and balls of forced meat; and after that there came fruit, melons, grapes, and nectarines; and they gave them drink out of silver and golden jugs, particularly sugar and cream, a pleasant beverage which they make in summer time.'

Timour had several palaces and gardens within an easy distance of Samarkand, and he entertained the Spanish ambassadors at one named Dilkoosha, or Heart's Delight, and at another called the Bagh-i-Chenar, or Plane-tree Garden. In the latter 'there were many tents, and awnings of red cloth and of various coloured silks, some embroidered in various ways, and others plain. In the centre of the garden there was a very

beautiful house, built in the shape of a cross, and very richly adorned with ornaments. In the middle of it there were three chambers for placing beds and carpets in, and the walls were covered with glazed tiles.

'Opposite the entrance, in the largest of the chambers, there was a silver gilt table as high as a man, and three arms broad, on the top of which there was a bed of silk cloths, embroidered with gold, placed one on the top of the other, and here the lord was seated. The walls were hung with rose-coloured silk cloths, ornamented with plates of silver gilt, set with emeralds, pearls, and other precious stones, tastefully arranged. Above these ornaments there were pieces of silk, a *palmo* broad, whence hung tassels of various colours, and the wind moved them backwards and forwards, which caused a very pretty effect. Before the great arch which formed the entrance to the chamber there were ornaments of the same kind, and silk cloths raised up by spear poles, and kept together by silken cords, with large tassels which came down to the ground.

'The other chambers were furnished in the same way, and on the floors there were carpets and rush mats. In the centre of the house, opposite the door, there were two gold tables, each standing on four legs, and the table and legs were all in one. They were each five *palmos* long, and three broad; and seven golden phials stood upon them, two of which were set with large pearls, emeralds, and turquoises, and each one had a ruby near the mouth. There were also six round golden cups, one of which was set with large, round, clear pearls inside, and in the centre of it was a ruby, two fingers broad, and of a brilliant colour.'

It must not be supposed, however, that these elegant and artistic objects were the handiwork of the Tatars. Such articles as were not spoils of war, were wrought by the artificers whom Timour carried into captivity from more settled and

civilized States. It needed not to scratch either Timour or the least barbarous of his tribe to find the Tatar. Their rude and savage nature lay on the surface, and continually manifested itself in the ordinary incidents of life. Thus it happened that the ambassadors on the occasion of their visit to the Bagh-i-Chenar were so long delayed by the dilatoriness of their interpreter, that they did not arrive until the dinner was over. In his fury Timour ordered a hole to be bored through the interpreter's nose, a cord passed through, and the poor wretch led in this ignominious fashion up and down the ranks of the army. 'He had scarcely finished speaking when men took the interpreter by the nose to bore a hole in it,' and it was only at Clavijo's earnest intercession that the offender was pardoned.

The Tatars were potent wassailers, notwithstanding Mohammed's prohibition against the use of fermented liquors. The ambassadors, abstemious like all well-bred Spaniards, were astonished at the hard-drinking of the ladies, who held their own against their male companions. Timour having invited them to a wine party—and without his permission no one could indulge in strong drink, either publicly or in private—they were enabled to describe the mode and manner of a drinking bout from actual observation. 'The wine,' says the chronicler of their doings, 'is given after dinner, and they serve it out in such quantities, and so often, that it makes the men drunk; and they do not consider that there is either pleasure or festivity without being drunk. The attendants serve the wine on their knees, and, when one cup is finished, they give another; and these men have no other duty, except to give another cup as soon as the first is finished. As soon as one attendant is tired of filling the cups, another takes his place.'

There was an attendant to every two or three guests, who were continually pressed to take more. A refusal to drink was regarded as an insult, and no heel-taps were allowed under any

pretence. 'They drink from one cup, once or twice, and if they are called upon to drink by their love of the lord, or by the lord's head, they must drink it all at one pull, without leaving a drop. They call the man who drinks the most wine "Bahadoor," which is as much as to say "a valorous man;" and he who does not drink is made to do so, although he does not wish it.' Timour even sent a jug of wine to the ambassadors before they set out from their own quarters, 'so that they might arrive in a jovial mood.'

The preliminary meal was substantial, and 'consisted of many roasted horses, boiled and roasted sheep, and rice cooked in their mode.' After every one's hunger was satisfied a Meerza made his appearance with a silver basin full of silver coins, which he scattered over the company. The ambassadors were then clothed in robes of honour, and acknowledged the royal favour by thrice bending the knee.

At these feasts the crowd was so great that the guards had to clear a path for the Spaniards, 'and the dust was such that people's faces and clothes were all one colour.' In the vast plain that stretched out in front of this palace, 20,000 persons were assembled within the space of three or four days, all dwelling in tents. 'In this horde there are always butchers, and cooks who sell cooked sheep, and others who sell fruit and barley, and bakers who sell bread. Every division of the horde is provided with all that the troops require, and they are arranged in streets. There are even baths and bath-men in the horde, who pitch their tents, and make their huts for hot baths with boilers for heating the water, and all that they require; and as each man arrived, he was shown his station.'

The Spaniards appear to have been deeply impressed with the splendour of the spacious awnings made of white linen cloth relieved by cloths of many colours, and of great length and height, for the double purpose of acting as a screen against

the rays of the sun and of admitting a free current of air. A crimson carpet was laid down to walk upon, and the ornamentation generally exhibited a magnificent taste. At a little distance a wall of silken cloth, as high as a man on horseback, ran all round, to secure perfect privacy. On the top of one tent was a large silver gilt eagle with outspread wings, and below that, just over the entrance, three silver gilt falcons with extended wings and heads turned up towards the eagle. The most superb tents were intended for Timour's wives, but a grand pavilion was reserved as a banqueting hall.

On the marriage of one of his grandsons, Timour commanded all the shopkeepers in Samarkand to come out into the plain, and there establish their stalls. Each trade had a separate street for its tents, and was obliged to devise a game or entertainment for the recreation of the gathered multitude. Gallows were erected at convenient points,—Timour very unnecessarily informing his trembling subjects that he knew how to be severe, as well as how to be merciful and bounteous. And he very soon acted up to this declaration by hanging a great lord whom he had left in Samarkand as Governor, and who had neglected his duties. The delinquent's property was also confiscated, and a faithful friend who ventured to intercede for him was likewise ordered off to execution. At the request, however, of a Meerza, or royal prince, this sentence was commuted to a fine of 400,000 silver bezants, each worth a silver rial. But when this penalty was discharged the unhappy man was tortured to give more, and when he had parted with all he possessed, he was hanged by the feet till death terminated his misery.

Another great man to whom had been confided the care of 3000 horses, being unable to produce that number, expiated his carelessness on the gallows, though he offered to make good the loss by delivering over 6000 horses. 'In this and other

ways the lord administered justice.' He was also impartial, and exercised the same severity towards the weak as towards the powerful. Certain provision dealers having asked too much for their goods were summarily executed, and likewise certain shoemakers, while fines were imposed upon others. 'The custom is that when a great man is put to death he is hanged; but the meaner sort are beheaded.' Whence it appeared that the Tatars differed from modern Mohammedans as to the peculiar consequences of death by strangulation.

According to Sheref-ood-deen, an amphitheatre covered in with carpets was erected on this occasion, in which masquerading of a very primitive character was exhibited. 'The women were dressed like goats, others like sheep, and fairies, and they ran after each other. The skinners and butchers appeared like lions and foxes, and all other tradesmen contributed specimens of their skill.'

One day the ambassadors were invited to a carouse in a pavilion within an enclosure, of which the following description is given:—'One of the walls was of crimson cloth covered with embroidery of gold lace in many figures and patterns, which was very beautiful to look upon. This wall was higher than any of the others, and the entrance was shaped like an arch, with a vaulted covering above it; and the whole was embroidered in beautiful designs with gold lace; and the doors were of carpeting embroidered in the same way. On the top of the entrance there was a square tower with turrets, all made of cloth embroidered with gold; and the wall had turrets of embroidered cloth, all round it, at intervals. There were windows in the walls, with lattices made of silken cords, and these windows also had cloth shutters. Within the enclosure the tents were pitched, and they were very rich and beautiful. Close to this enclosure there was another, the walls of which were of white satin, with the entrance and windows the same as

the former, and these enclosures had doors leading from one to the other. In front of these enclosures a great pavilion was pitched, made of white silk, and it was ornamented, both inside and out, with many patterns, in various-coloured silks.

'The ground near the pavilion of the lord was covered with jars of wine, which were placed in a row, a stone's throw in length. No man was allowed to pass beyond these jars towards the pavilion, and mounted guards were placed to watch the line, with bows and arrows, and maces, in their hands. If any one passed the line, they shot arrows at him, and gave him such blows with their maces that some men were taken outside the gates for dead.'

Near the pavilion a number of small awnings were erected, and under each awning was placed a jar of wine of portentous dimensions. It has already been said that the ladies of the Court rivalled the male guests in potations deep. They drank, we are told, from small golden cups placed on flat plates of gold. Their attendants, in presenting these cups, touched the ground thrice with their right knee, and had their hands wrapped in white napkins, and in retiring they walked backwards.

A drinking bout usually lasted some hours, unbroken by eating, and the great khanum or wife could not understand how it was that Clavijo never touched fermented liquors. 'The drinking was such that some of the men fell down drunk before her; and this was considered very jovial, for they think that there can be no pleasure without drunken men. . . They also brought great quantities of roasted sheep and horses, and other dressed meats; and they eat all this with much noise, tearing the pieces away from each other, and making game over their food. They also brought rice cooked in various ways, and tarts made with flour, sugar, and herbs; and besides the

meat brought in basins, there were other pieces on skins for those who wanted them.'

While Clavijo and his companions were at Samarkand, Jehangheer's son, Peer Mohammed, arrived from India, and they went to pay their respects to him. 'He had on a robe of blue satin, embroidered with golden wheels, some on the back, and others on the breast and sleeves. His hat was adorned with large pearls and precious stones, with a very brilliant ruby on the top; and the people who stood round him treated him with great reverence and ceremony. In front of him were two wrestlers, dressed in leathern doublets without sleeves; but they neither of them could throw the other. At last one of them threw the other and held him down for a long time; for they all said that if he got up the fall would not be counted.' Timour came forth about noon, and many games were played; jugglers exhibited much cleverness of sleight of hand; and trained elephants went through various performances. Three hundred jars of wine were then placed before the King, and also large skins full of cream into which had been put whole loaves of sugar.

When the guests were all duly ranged the chief Khanum made her appearance. 'She had on a robe of red silk, trimmed with gold lace, which was long and flowing, but without sleeves or any opening, except one to admit the head and two arm-holes. It had no waist, and fifteen ladies held up the skirts of it to enable her to walk. She had so much white lead on her face that it looked like paper; and this is put on to protect it from the sun, for when they travel in winter or summer all great ladies put this on their faces. She had a thin veil over her face, and a crested head-dress of red cloth, which hung some way down the back. This crest was very high, and was covered with large pearls, rubies, emeralds, and other precious stones,

and it was embroidered with gold lace, on the top of which there was a circlet of gold set with pearls. On the top of all there was a little castle, on which were three very large and brilliant rubies, surmounted by a tall plume of white feathers. One of these feathers hung down as low as the eyes, and they were secured by golden threads; and as they moved, they waved to and fro. Her hair, which was very black, hung down over her shoulders, and they value black hair much more than any other colour.

'She was accompanied by three hundred ladies, and an awning was carried over Cano, supported by a lance, which was borne by a man. It was made of white silk, in the form of the top of a round tent, and held over her to protect her from the sun. A number of eunuchs who guard the women walked before her, and in this way she came to the pavilion where the lord was, and sat down near him with all her ladies, and three ladies held her head-dress with their hands, that it might not fall on one side.' Seven other wives came and took their seats below the Khanum, as likewise did the spouse of Peer Mohammed. Hard drinking, in which the ladies took their part, went on both before and after dinner, and lasted all night.

The ambassadors were taken one day to see the Khanum's private tents. In the centre stood a cabinet made of gold, richly enamelled, as high as a man's breast. The top was flat, surrounded by small turrets in green and blue enamel, set with pearls and precious stones. On opening the door of the cabinet a shelf was seen on which were ranged numerous cups, and above these six golden balls covered with gems and pearls. At the foot of the cabinet was a small gold table, two *palmos* high, set with precious stones all round, and on the top a clear brilliant emerald. The length of this table was four *palmos*, and its width one and a half. In front of this rose a golden tree, with a trunk as big round as a man's leg, with many branches

and oak leaves. It was the height of a man, and overshadowed the table. The fruit consisted of rubies, emeralds, turquoises, sapphires, and fine pearls. Birds of enamelled gold and of many colours were perched upon the boughs, and pecked at the fruit with outstretched wings. Against the wall of the tent was placed a wooden table inlaid with silver gilt, and beside it a bed of rich silk, embroidered with golden leaves and flowers. The floor was covered with rich carpets of silk. Timour himself had a portable mosque, beautifully painted with gold and blue, which accompanied him in his most distant expeditions.

Among Timour's visitors about this time was the Khan of Badakhshan, who is called in this narrative 'the lord of Balaxia, which is a great city where rubies are found; and he came with a large troop of knights and followers. The ambassadors went to this lord of Balaxia, and asked him how he got the rubies; and he replied that near the city there was a mountain whence they brought them, and that every day they broke up a rock in search of them. He said that when they found a vein they got out the rubies skilfully by breaking the rock all round with chisels.'

Another tributary arrived from 'Aquivi,' for which Mr Markham suggests Akshee, but it was evidently some place near the modern Jerm, for the narrator adds that it is there 'they procure the blue mineral, and in the rock they find sapphires.' The distance of both Balaxia and Aquivi is estimated at ten days' journey from Samarkand on the route to India.

The 'blue mineral,' lajwuod, or lapis lazuli, obtained from a mine about 1500 feet up the side of a mountain in the Kokcha valley, was declared by Marco Polo to be 'the finest in the world,' and 'got in a vein like silver.' It is found, according to Captain Wood, in a black and white limestone, unstratified but much veined with coloured lines. The mountain is de-

scribed as rugged and barren, and ascended by a steep dangerous path. A sloping shaft, ten feet square, has been sunk from the surface, and a gallery about eighty paces in length ends in a hole some twenty feet deep. The roof of the gallery occasionally falls in, and the mine is worked in the rudest possible manner, but of late years it has been virtually abandoned. Three varieties of lapis lazuli were extracted in Captain Wood's time—1836-37—one of an indigo blue colour, one light blue, and the other green. The 'Balas' rubies of Badakhshan, or Balakhshan, were long famous in Europe as well as in Asia. Is it not written in the 'Court of Love'?

> 'For I beheld the toures high and strong,
> And high pinacles, large of hight and long,
> With plate of gold bespred on euery side,
> And precious stones, the stone werke for to hide,
> No saphire in Inde, no rube rich of price,
> There lacked than, nor emeraud so grene,
> Balès Turkès, ne thing to my deuice,
> That may the castle maken for to shene.'

Marco Polo speaks of Badakhshan as being, in the middle of the 14th century, a very great kingdom governed by an hereditary ruler, who claimed descent from Alexander the Great and a daughter of Darius—probably alluding to Roxana, daughter of the Sogdian chief. A writer in Pinkerton's collection, speaks of Badakhshan as 'a very ancient city, and exceeding strong by its situation in the mountains. It is dependent on the Khan of Proper Bukharia (the modern Khanat of Bokhara), and serves him for a kind of state prison, where he shuts up those from whom he thinks it convenient to secure himself. This town is not very big, but it is well enough built, and very populous. . . It is a great thoroughfare of the Karawans designed for Little Bukharia (now Eastern Toorkestan), or to China, which take the same road.'

The pseudo-Alexandrine dynasty terminated in the 15th

century, though, even at the present day, the petty chiefs of Darwaz, Kulab, Shighnan, Wakhan, Chitral, Gilgit, Swat, and Balti, all lay claim to the Macedonian conqueror as their common ancestor. The city of Badakhshan has also passed away, the chief place in the province being at present Fyzabad.

The ruby mines no longer lie within the boundaries of Badakhshan, being situated to the north of the Panja, the recently accepted line of demarcation between the territories of the Khan of Bokhara and those of the Ameer of Afghanistan. The mines, situated about 1200 feet above the river, were formerly a royal monopoly, but have long since been exhausted. The late Moorad Bey, of Kunduz, on conquering this country, was so disgusted with the unproductiveness of the mines, that he ceased working them, and sold the miners as slaves. In 1866 a new mine was opened, but the rubies extracted were comparatively worthless.

Clavijo and his companions had occasion more than once to recognize the absolute authority exercised by Timour, and the abject humility with which he was obeyed. Having issued orders for the erection of a bazaar right through the heart of the capital, the houses then occupying the site were pulled down with such rapidity that their owners had barely time to escape from their ruins, with such of their effects as were most easily carried. Within twenty-one days the new bazaar was built, and covered in with a vaulted roof, while, to cool the air and to supply the bazaar people with water, fountains were established at convenient intervals. As fast as a shop was completed, a tradesman was compelled to take it.

In like manner, the mosque constructed in memory of Timour's grandson, Mohammed Sooltan Meerza, who died of the wounds he received at the battle of Angora, being judged too small, was pulled down and replaced by a more suitable edifice in ten days. The mosque over the remains of the Khanum's

mother was also demolished, to make way for one on a grander scale. Timour himself, being too ill to mount on horseback, superintended the workmen from a litter, while the more active supervision was exercised by some of the Meerzas.

Samarkand was at that time a little larger than Seville, and possessed far more extensive suburbs. 'The city,' we read, 'is surrounded on all sides by many gardens and vineyards, which extend in some directions a league and a half, in others two leagues, the city being in the middle. In these houses and gardens there is a large population, and there are people selling bread, meat, and many other things; so that the suburbs are much more thickly inhabited than the city within the walls. Amongst these gardens, which are outside the city, there are great and noble houses, and here the lord has several palaces. The nobles of the city have their houses amongst these gardens, and they are so extensive that when a man approaches the city, he sees nothing but a mass of very high trees. Many streams of water flow through the city, and through these gardens, and among these gardens there are many cotton plantations and melon grounds, and the melons of this ground are good and plentiful; and at Christmas time there is a wonderful quantity of melons and grapes. Every day so many camels come in laden with melons, that it is a wonder how the people can eat them all. They preserve them from year to year in the villages in the same way as figs, taking off their skins, cutting them in long slices, and then drying them in the sun.'

The land around bore forth abundantly, but the agriculturists were captives imported from other countries. 'The sheep,' continues the narrator, 'are very large, and have long tails, some weighing 20 lbs., and they are as much as a man can hold in his hand.' Two of these animals could be had for a ducat, and, notwithstanding the sudden influx of foreign treasure, and even when the resident population was so largely increased by

the presence of Timour's Court, an army in itself, all kinds of provisions were procurable at prices that appeared low to the Spaniards.

'The city is so large, and so abundantly supplied, that it is wonderful. . . The supplies of this city do not consist of food alone, but of silks, satins, gauzes, tafetas, velvets, and other things. The lord had so strong a desire to ennoble this city that he brought captives, to increase its population, from every land which he had conquered, especially all those who were skilful in any art. From Damascus he brought weavers of silk, and men who made bows, glass, and earthenware, so that of these things Samarkand produces the best in the world. From Turkey he brought archers, masons, and silversmiths. He also brought men skilled in making engines of war; and he sowed hemp and flax, which had never before been seen in the land.' These captives were computed at 150,000, including men and women, 'Turks, Arabs, Moors, Christians, Armenians, Greek Catholics and Jacobites, and those who baptize with fire in the face (Parsees), who are Christians with peculiar opinions.' Many of these unfortunate beings lived under trees, or in caves, outside the walls of city.

From Russia and Tatary were imported linen and furs; from India, nutmegs, cloves, mace, cinnamon, ginger, and many other spices, which did not find their way to Alexandria; and from China, silks, satins, musk, rubies, diamonds, pearls, and rhubarb. The Chinese were at that period deemed the most skilful artizans in the world, and were wont to say of themselves that they had two eyes, that the Franks had one, and that the people of all other countries were blind.

In Samarkand there were several open spaces in which were sold cooked meats, fowls, and other birds, 'very nicely dressed.' These stalls were attended night and day. Slaughter-houses, too, were provided for killing not only sheep and horses, but

also fowls, pheasants, and partridges. At one end of the city rose a strong castle, defended by a stream flowing through a ravine. Here the royal treasure was stored, and here, too, a thousand captive armourers were incessantly employed all the year round in making head-pieces, bows, and arrows.

When setting out upon an important expedition Timour had made a vow not to enter this castle for seven years, and the time expired during Clavijo's visit to Samarkand. The Tatar monarch proceeded thither with much pomp, and distributed among his 'knights' 3000 breast-plates, adorned with red cloth but not well tempered. He also gave away a vast number of tall, round-shaped helmets, having in front a plate to move up and down and act as a visor.

The distance from Samarkand to Cambalu, or Pekin, was estimated at a six months' journey, of which one third lay across bleak steppes, frequented only by roving shepherds and their flocks. During the month of June 800 camels arrived from Cambalu, loaded with precious stuffs. Fifteen days to the eastward of Samarkand was situated the country of the Amazons, who were in the habit of repairing once a year, with such of their daughters as had attained the age of puberty, to the nearest settlement, where they consorted for a while with the likeliest men. Their female children they brought up under their own eyes, but the males were sent to their fathers. These masculine dames were Christians of the Greek Church, and 'of the lineage of the Amazons who were at Troy when it was destroyed by the Greeks.'

The police regulations of Samarkand appear to have been strict and efficient. No acts of personal violence were permitted, but all quarrels were referred to magistrates, who sat in tents to administer justice, either in the police or the revenue department, and the proceedings were reported to Timour. The judge's decision was written out by a scribe, and entered in

a public register. The warrant or decree was confirmed by four separate impressions of the judge's seal, and by that of Timour's seal—in the middle—three cyphers, two above and one below, with the legend 'Rasty va Rousty.'

The chief source of revenue was the land-tax, which was fixed at one-third of the produce from irrigated lands, with an additional rate for the use of water derived from public reservoirs. But whosoever constructed a tank, planted a grove, or broke up fresh land, was exempted from taxation for two years. The use of whip or scourge was forbidden, serais were built for the accommodation of travellers, and roads and bridges were kept in good repair.

The army was still divided as in the time of Chinghiz Khan into Tens, Hundreds, Thousands, and so forth. Each man was provided with two horses, a bow, a quiver filled with arrows, a sword, a saw, an awl, a ball of thread, ten needles, and a leathern knapsack. One tent sufficed for eighteen horsemen. The officers, however, wore a coat of mail, and had each his own tent, and from five to three hundred horses according to his rank and duties. There was a standing order that encampments should always, if possible, be fixed on high ground, and near a supply of water. Mercy to the vanquished was also particularly enjoined, but seemingly with little effect.

Timour's favourite pastime from boyhood was chess, at which he became such an adept that he increased the number of pieces and squares, and complicated the moves. When the news of his youngest son's birth was brought to him, he had just castled his king—exclaiming, as was customary, 'Shah Rokh,' and that became the young prince's name.

The departure of the Spanish ambassadors was hastened by the alarming illness of Timour. They were dismissed by the Meerzas without much ceremony, but were abundantly supplied with whatever they could reasonably want during the painful

journey that awaited them. For the first part of the way they travelled in the company of the ambassadors of the Sultan of Babylon, and had a painful experience of the horrors of the desert.

'On Wednesday the 10th of December (1404), they crossed the great river of Biamo (Amou or Oxus) in boats. On the banks there were great plains of sand, and the sand was moved from one part to another by the wind, and thrown up in mounds. In this sandy waste there are great valleys and hills, and the wind blew the sand away from one hill to another, for it was very light; and on the ground, when the wind had blown away the sand, the marks of waves were left, and men could not keep their eyes on this sand when the sun was shining. This road cannot be travelled over without a guide who knows the marks and signs of the desert, and these guides are called Anchies, and the ambassadors had one of these guides. On this road there is no water, except a few wells sunk in the sand, with vaulted roofs, and surrounded by brick walls, for if they were not covered the sand would fill them up. The water of these wells is either rain or snow water; and in the last day's journey they found no water, and they travelled all night; but at the hour of Mass they came to a well and drank, and gave water to their beasts, and they all had much need of it.'

From that illness, indeed, Timour recovered, and on the 8th of January, 1405, he quitted the luxuries of Sámarkand in the midst of a fall of snow. At the head of an army of veterans, computed at 200,000 in number, he crossed the river Syhoon, or Jaxartes, on the ice, and pitched his camp outside the walls of Otrar. His indignation had been roused to fury by a demand for tribute made by the Chinese ambassador, whom, as already related, he publicly insulted as the representative of 'a thief and a bad man.' He had resolved, therefore, to repeat the teachings of Chinghiz, and to bring that insolent people

under complete subjection. His preparations had been made with great forethought, and on the most extensive scale. As the march to Pekin would occupy not less than six months, Timour took with him many thousand loads of corn to sow along the line of march, so that an ample provision might be secured for his victorious soldiers on their return homewards.

Otrar, however—the Farab of Arabian writers—was the farthest point he reached. Attacked by fever and ague, he indulged to excess in draughts of iced water, and on the 17th February, 1405, closed his career of bloodshed and desolation. He was 69 years of age, and had reigned 35 years. He left behind him thirty-six male descendants. His body was embalmed with musk and rose water, wrapt in a linen shroud, and carried back to Samarkand in an ebony coffin. His ruined palace without the walls, and his jasper tomb within the city, are still visited with curiosity and respect by the Russians, who now lord it in the capital of the mighty Tamerlane.

Timour is described as tall of stature, broad-shouldered, and possessed of great muscular strength. He was born, it is said, with white hair, like Zal, a hero of Persian romance. His head was large, his forehead open, his complexion ruddy, and his beard ample and flowing. His character was a singular mixture of great qualities, painfully contrasted with the vices of barbarism. A dreamer of dreams and oftentimes babbling about clemency, he was utterly reckless of human life or suffering, and for the sake of gratifying the lust of conquest was ready to sacrifice thousands upon thousands of his fellow-creatures. It is true, he did not spare his own person, and was always to be found in the post of danger. He has been preferred, with little reason, to Chinghiz Khan, on the ground that the latter was a Jehan-Gheer, or World Subduer, while the former was not only a Jehan-Gheer, but a Jehan-Dar, or World Holder. As a fact, however, Timour consolidated nothing. He swept over Central

and Western Asia like a tornado, and his course was marked by towns in ashes, countries depopulated, and pyramids of human skulls. He made a wilderness and called it a conquest.

'Though one of the greatest of warriors,' says Sir John Malcolm, 'he was one of the worst of monarchs. He was able, brave, and generous; but ambitious, cruel, and oppressive.' It is related of him that in the mosque of Meshed he chose to perform his devotions at the tomb of Abou Moslem, whose power was purchased at the cost of a million lives. 'The bloody shadow of Abou Moslem,' exclaimed a dervish, 'is hovering over thy head, O thou Man of Blood!'

On the other hand, Timour was an ardent lover of truth, and hated falsehood above all things. Of a serious, and even gloomy, disposition, he was a munificent patron of letters, and was himself an author. The 'Mulfurzat Timoury,' or the Institutes of Timour, are at once an amusing autobiography and a code of despotic government. His knowledge of the Koran dated from his childhood, and he was able to converse fluently in the Toorkee, Persian, and Mongolian tongues. He was fond of rich apparel, and wore diamond ear-rings of great value. He usually arrayed himself in loose flowing silken robes with a tall conical hat of beaver skin, surmounted by a pear-shaped ruby, encircled with pearls and brilliants.

In this reign lived the great Bokharan mystic Saint, Khoja Baha-ood-deen, founder of the Order of Nakishbendi, three pilgrimages to whose shrine were held equivalent to one to the Kaaba. Timour's liberality to poets, physicians, and historians was only equalled by his munificence to astronomers and santons.

CHAPTER VII.

MOHAMMED BABER: ANTHONY JENKINSON.

BABER—FERGHANA—BABER'S FATHER AND UNCLE—CAPTURE OF SAMARKAND—REVERSE OF FORTUNE—A MOGHUL CUSTOM—BABER DEFEATED BY SHEIBANI BEG—THE KAFIRS, EIMAUKS, AND HAZAREHS—BABER RECOVERS SAMARKAND—EXPELLED BY THE OOZBEGS—CONQUERS HINDOSTAN—THE OOZBEGS—ISMAEL THE SOUFFAVEAN—THE SHEIBANIDES—ANTHONY JENKINSON—URGHUNJ—ATTACKED BY ROBBERS—BOKHARA—THE KING—TRADE—RETURN TO MOSCOW.

'To reign, rather than to govern,' remarks Gibbon, 'was the ambition of (Timour's) children and grandchildren, the enemies of each other and of the people. A fragment of the empire was upheld with some glory by Sharokh, his youngest son; but after *his* decease the scene was again involved in darkness and blood; and before the end of a century Transoxiana and Persia were trampled by the Uzbeks from the north, and the Turkmans of the black and white sheep.' Shah Rokh was, in fact, Timour's fourth son, and is represented by Eastern historians as a brave and successful general, a just, amiable, and unambitious prince. He reigned for 40 years over Khorassan and the immediately adjacent country, and restored many of the cities that had been destroyed by his father's barbarous soldiery. The immense empire, however, that had been overrun, rather than established, by Timour, fell to pieces at the death of that ruthless conqueror, though in India the illustrious names of Baber, Akbar, Jehan-Gheer, Shah-Jehan, and Aurungzeb appear in the roll of his descendants.

Mohammed Baber was born in Ferghana in the year 1483. On the mother's side he was descended from Chagatai and Chinghiz, and when yet barely twelve was placed on the throne of that small and mountainous principality. One of his uncles was ruler of Samarkand and Bokhara; a second governed the district of Hissar; a third was lord of Kabool and Ghuznee; while a fourth held his court at Tashkend. His seemingly powerful relatives, however, were by no means a source even of moral strength to the youthful prince. Indeed, their first thought on his father's death was to divide the little State among themselves, but it so happened that one fell sick, another lost his horses on the march, and their joint enterprise fell to the ground.

Baber himself says of Ferghana, 'This country is in the fifth climate (that is, the fifth from the equator), on the extreme boundary of the habitable world. On the east is Kashgar; on the west Samarkand; on the north there were formerly the cities of Almalig, Almatu, and Otrar, but they have been laid desolate by the Uzbeks.' The chief district in this petty kingdom was Andijan, situated on the south bank of the Syr, abounding in grain and fruit of all kinds, with a supply of melons exceeding all possible demand, and pheasants of excellent flavour. The people were Toorks, and remarkable for their beauty, but too proud to cultivate the soil for the sake of 'the top of a weed,' their irreverent expression for ears of corn. It was not, however, a healthy province, owing to the prevalence of ague in the autumnal months.

To the eastward was situated the town of Ush, with its delightful gardens of tulips, roses, and violets. 'Near the mosque, which is outside the town, there is a meadow of clover so pleasant that travellers love to take rest there, and it is a common sport of the townsfolk to carry all who fall asleep there, across the three streams. Westward lay Marghinan, celebrated

for its apricots, pomegranates, and white deer, and inhabited mostly by Sarts, an aboriginal race, 'notorious all through Mawaralnahr for blustering and love of boxing.' Turning to the south-west, stood the town of Asfera in the midst of gardens and groves of almond trees, and also peopled by Sarts. 'In a rising ground on the south-east is found the stone mirror, about 20 feet in length' (crystal or talc?). To the west of Andijan the ancient city of Kojend commanded the bend of the river Syr, which here turns in a northerly direction. In the surrounding country white deer, hares, and mountain goats were exceedingly numerous, and almonds so plentiful as to be an article of export. The climate, however, was insalubrious, and inflammation of the eye so prevalent that the very sparrows suffered from it.

Baber's father, Omar Sheikh, regarded Akshee as his capital, —a town built upon the banks of the Syr, some 36 miles from Andijan. The castle stood on the edge of a precipice high above the river. The melons grown in the suburbs were incomparable, white deer, 'the fowl of the desert,' and 'very fat' hares, were the commonest of live things. The people disputed with them of Kasan as to the beauty and climate of their respective districts, but 'the gardens of Kasan being all sheltered along the side of the river, it was called the mantle of five lambskins.' The revenue sufficed for the maintenance of nearly 4000 troops.

According to Baber, his father was appointed ruler of Ferghana not so much for his own merits as because he bore the same name as a chief upon whom Timour had once conferred the government. He was of low stature and wore his tunic remarkably tight, but was not particular either as to food or dress. On state occasions he donned a turban, with the end hanging down, but at ordinary times he preferred the common Moghul cap. He belonged to the Haneefah sect, and was very

strict, never omitting the five daily prayers. His favourite reading was the Koran and Firdousi's Shah Nameh, or Book of Kings. Such was his sense of justice that, a Chinese caravan having been overwhelmed in a snow-storm, he preserved the property of the unfortunate victims until their heirs came to claim it in the following year. He was brave, affable, sweet-tempered, an indifferent archer, but strong in the arm, and a powerful hitter. When young he was too much addicted to intoxicating drinks, and even in his latter days had a carouse once or twice every week, besides continually eating comfits prepared with bhang. He was fond of backgammon and not averse from a turn with the dice.

Notwithstanding, or perhaps because of, his amiability, Omar Sheikh was thrice engaged in hostilities with his nearest relatives. In a battle with his father-in-law he was worsted, and also by his eldest brother Ahmed, the ruler of Samarkand. Over the Oozbegs, however, he was victorious, but in 1494 his brother Ahmed and one of his uncles combined their forces against him. 'At this juncture, being in the fort of Akshee, he was precipitated from the edge of the steep rock with his pigeons and pigeon-house, and departed to the other world,'—and his son Baber reigned in his stead. One of Omar Sheikh's Ameers is described as 'an excellent archer, and distinguished for his skill at leap-frog.'

Baber's uncle Ahmed Meerza of Samarkand was a very strict Mussulman in one respect, though lax in others. He never by any chance omitted one of the daily prayers, 'even when engaged in a drinking party,' and these bouts sometimes lasted from twenty to thirty days. In the intervals of sobriety he partook of 'pungent substances.' He was naturally of a penurious disposition, but brave, and dexterous with bow and arrow. One of his wives, whom he married for love, took to drinking, and became so jealous that she would not suffer him to speak to

any other ladies of his harem. 'At last, however, he put her to death, and delivered himself from the reproach.' One of his Ameers had 7000 servants and 500 falcons. Baber mentions a Mollah, who was a learned man and skilled in falconry, and who 'knew the art of bringing down rain and snow by appointment.'

A tribe of five or six thousand families inhabiting the wilds of Andijan, and trusting to their mountains for protection, refused to pay their annual tribute to Baber, whereupon he despatched against them a strong body of soldiers, who captured 1500 horses and 20,000 sheep, which were magnanimously divided among the captors.

While yet a mere youth Baber became involved in operations of a far more serious character than the chastisement of a refractory tribe of mountaineers. His first important expedition was directed against Samarkand, called the Protected City because it had never been taken by storm. Young as he was, he maintained a strict discipline among his rude soldiery, and inspired them with confidence in his courage and ability. Some traders, who had come to his camp with goods for sale, having complained to him that they had been robbed, he 'commanded that everything should be restored to them without reserve, and before the first watch of the morrow there was not a bit of thread nor a broken needle that was not recovered by the owner.'

Samarkand surrendered in November, 1497, after sustaining a seven months' siege, and Baber dwells lovingly upon the many objects of admiration within its walls. The Great Mosque with iron gates and 480 pillars, built by Timour after the conquest of Hindostan and by the hands of Indian stone-cutters and masons, especially attracted his attention. The Echoing Mosque was also deemed remarkable, nor were the many beautiful palaces and gardens allowed to pass unnoticed.

To every trade was allotted its own bazaar. Manufactures also flourished. The paper of Samarkand was greatly esteemed, as was likewise the *kermezi*, or crimson velvet,—the cramoisy of European writers.

Marco Polo, in his description of Turcomania, after abusing the Mohammedan inhabitants as 'a rude people with an uncouth language of their own,' mentions the Armenian and Greek traders and artisans who dwelt in the towns and villages, and adds: 'They weave the finest and handsomest carpets in the world, and also a great quantity of fine and rich silks of cramoisy and other colours, and plenty of other stuffs.' Whence it appears that Ferghana, at the close of the 15th century, was inferior in arts and manufactures to Mawaralnahr in the latter part of the 13th, for otherwise Baber would scarcely have taken any particular notice of the excellencies of Samarkand.

His success was transient. His allies and soldiers having plundered the citizens of all that was easily turned to account, broke out into violent mutiny, and finally returned to their homes. Some of his own people, too, rebelled and laid siege to Andijan, with the intention of raising his brother Jehangheer to the throne of Ferghana. At that critical moment Baber fell ill and lost the power of speech. Andijan was taken, and Samarkand renounced its allegiance. Khojend alone remained faithful, and for a while he wandered about almost in despair at the head of a small band of followers, who lived as well as they could by pillage. However, in 1499 he recovered Andijan, and two years later made himself master of Samarkand with only 240 men, the largest force he was then able to muster.

In the year 1500 Baber married his cousin Aisha Sooltan Begum, and he states with amusing naïveté that, although at first his affection for her was not slight, yet through bashfulness

he used to visit her only once in fifteen or twenty days. After a while love declined while his shyness increased, 'insomuch that my mother the Khanum used to fall upon me and scold me with great fury, sending me off like a criminal to visit her once in a month or forty days.' Shortly after this domestic event Baber was signally defeated by Sheibani Mohammed Beg, an Oozbeg chief, who became the founder of a dynasty. Shut up in a stronghold and reduced to the verge of starvation, he contrived to escape under the darkness of night, accompanied by his mother and two other ladies. His eldest sister was taken to wife by Sheibani, to whom she bore a daughter, but was afterwards bestowed by him in marriage upon a Syud.

A singular Moghul custom, which may be termed the Blessing of the Standards, is thus described by Baber. He was at the time a fugitive at the court of his uncle. 'Presently,' he writes, 'there came tidings that Tambol was moving against Uratippa. Wherefore the Khan led forth his army from Tashkend in due order, with right and left wing, and then, after the Mogul custom, formed the *irîm*, or hunting circle. The horns were blown, and the Khan having alighted, they brought nine horse-tail standards. One Mogul stood by, holding the shank-bone of an ox, to which a long cotton cloth was tied. Another fastened three strips of white cloth beneath the horse-tail of the standard, and passed them under the staff of the nine streamers. The Khan took his stand on the corner of one cloth, while I stood upon another, and Prince Mohammed upon the third. Then the Mogul, who tied the cloths, taking the shank-bone in his hands made an oration in the Mogul tongue, often pointing to the standards. Then the Khan and all the men near him took some spirit of mare's milk, and sprinkled it towards the nine standards. In that instant all the drums and trumpets struck up at once, and the soldiers raised the war-cry. These ceremonies were repeated thrice. After that, they leaped

on horseback, then sent up the shout of battle, and put their horses to full speed. The customs established by Zingis Khan are observed to the present day. Every man had an appointed station in the right, left, or centre, and the post is inherited from generation to generation. Next morning the army formed the *ivîm*, and hunted in the vicinity of Sam Seirek.'

The Oozbeg invaders, consisting of an aggregation of Toorks, Mongols, and vagabond descendants of the soldiers of Chinghiz and Timour, proved too strong for Baber, who in 1504 reluctantly bade farewell to Ferghana, and with less than 300 men passed over into the district of Hissar. He was then in the 22nd year of his age, and now for the first time began to use the razor. Crossing the Amou, he advanced to Termedh, being joined by thousands of Moghuls until the entire region between the Iron Gate and the Hindoo Koosh acknowledged him as master, the former ruler, Khosroo Shah, retiring to Khorassan, according to the Eastern proverb,

> Ten dervishes may sit on one carpet,
> But the same climate will not hold two kings.

Baber's next exploit was to cross the mountains by the Kipchak Pass, and take possession of Kabul. In his passage over the mountains he traversed the country of the Kafirs, of whom he observes, 'They are all wine-bibbers; every one of them carries a leathern bottle of wine about his neck. They never pray: they fear neither God nor man; and are heathenish in their usages.' They learned, however, to fear Timour. Trusting to their apparently inaccessible fastnesses, they treated with scorn and derision his summons to submit themselves to his supremacy. Turning the ravines in which they dwelt, Timour ascended to a height that domineered over them, and was thence lowered down on rafts or platforms from rock to rock—and five times was the operation repeated—until he stood on a level with the awe-stricken idolaters. He had with him a mere handful of

men, but it was felt impossible to resist a conqueror capable of such superhuman daring.

In this region pines, oaks, and the mastic-tree were met with in abundance, and a little lower down the mountain-side was gay as a parterre with a vast variety of tulips, one of which had a hundred petals, and is somewhat rashly supposed to have been rather a double poppy. The mountains were inhabited in other parts by Eimauks and Hazarehs, who spoke a Persian dialect, but whose features and habits bespoke a Moghul extraction. The Eimauks lived in camps called 'ordes,' and the Hazarehs in villages of thatched houses, each of which had a watch-tower, in which was posted a sentinel with a kettle-drum to sound the alarum. In one respect the Hazarehs were favourably distinguished from their neighbours—they never beat their wives.

At Heri, or Herat, Baber increased his store of useful knowledge; he there acquired the art of carving a goose. He was at the time a guest of Badia-ez-Zeman, a hospitable and jovial host, and one day a goose was set before him to his utter bewilderment. Badia, however, came to his relief and showed him how to cut up the savoury bird in slices. He was also entertained with concerts of music, the performers consisting of a harper and a player on the flute, who accompanied a singer with a good voice. 'The people of Heri,' he remarks, 'sing in a low, delicate, and equable style.' They were also very refined and polite in their manners, but overmuch addicted to the pleasures of the table, and narrowly missed giving Baber a taste for wine and dissipation.

Upon the discomfiture and death of Sheibani Khan in 1510 at the hands of Ismael the Souffavean, Baber saw that his opportunity had come, and fiercely attacked the Oozbegs in Hissar. Within a very brief space of time he drove them not only out of that district, but also out of Kunduz and Khotl,

and at the head of 60,000 horse, made himself master of all Tokhara. In the following year he re-entered Samarkand in triumph, the houses being hung with rich carpets and brocades, and the inhabitants greeting him with loud acclaim. Coins were struck in his name, and the *khutbeh*, or prayer for the reigning sovereign, was offered up for him in the mosques. So firmly established did he now consider himself, that he bestowed the government of Kabul upon his brother Nusser Meerza, and dismissed with handsome presents the Persian officers and their retainers who had assisted him in recovering the throne of his great ancestor Timour.

For some time after his restoration Baber resigned himself to pleasure and amusement, until rudely awakened to a sense of the uncertain tenure of power in half-civilized countries. Timour Sooltan, son of the deceased Sheibani Khan, suddenly swept over Mawaralnahr with a swarm of Oozbegs, and defeating Baber in battle, forced him to retire to Hissar. The struggle for the mastery was long protracted, for his Persian allies again flocked to his standard, but on the 14th October, 1514, a decisive engagement took place, in which the Oozbegs were completely victorious, and so vigorously did they follow up their advantage that the Moghuls were dispersed in all directions. Baber himself, bare-footed, and in his night-dress, escaped with difficulty into the citadel at Hissar, whence he was finally driven by famine, and in 1515 crossed the Paropamisan range for the last time.

The next few years were occupied in consolidating his power in Kandahar, but in 1519 Babèr felt strong enough to indemnify himself for the loss of his ancestral dominions by attempting the conquest of Hindostan. Crossing the Indus near Attock—the point chosen also by Alexander the Great, Timour, and Nadir Shah—he commenced the series of successes which culminated in the crowning victory of Paniput, on the 21st April,

1526. Baber's direct connection with the affairs of Central Asia ceased, however, on his flight from the famished citadel of Hissar, but it is recorded that he carried with him into India the barbarous Moghul practice of building up into pyramids the heads of his fallen enemies.

His son Hoomayoon retained the government of Badakhshan until shortly before his accession to the throne of Delhi in 1530. For rather more than two centuries after Hoomayoon's retirement that province remained virtually independent, until it was overrun by the armies of Shah Jehan, under Moorad and Aurungzeb. In the end that emperor conferred Badakhshan upon Nazar Mohammed Khan of Balkh, and with that act terminated the connection of the Moghul rulers of Hindostan with the countries lying to the north of the Hindoo Koosh.

The Oozbeg conquerors of Mawaralnahr were descended from the Moghul horde of 15,000 families settled in Siberia by Sheibani Khan, brother of the renowned Batou. Their name is said to signify 'one who is his own master,' but this interpretation is evidently an after-thought, suggested by the mastery they acquired over the people upon whom they were hurled by the advance of the Russians into their own domains. It is certainly more probable that they derived their apellation from Oozbeg, the ninth ruler of the house of Joujee, the eldest son of Chinghiz, who converted them from idolatry to the profession of Islam. In their irruption into the lands south of the Syhoon, or Jaxartes, they were led by a chief whose name recalled the memory of their original leader. Sheibani Mohammed Khan was not destined, however, to behold the final success of his people, being slain in a great battle near Merv in 1510. He is described as a patron of learned men, and a versifier of considerable merit. He was also the founder of several colleges and mosques, but after death his skull was converted into a

drinking cup by his conqueror Ismael Khan, the founder of the Souffavean dynasty of Persia.

Ismael was descended from Sheikh Souffee-ood-deen, who resided at Ardebil, and traced his lineage from Moussa-al-Kazeem, the seventh Imam, but who was still more revered for his personal sanctity. The ascendancy of the Sheeah sectarians in Persia dates from Ismael, who prided himself on springing from the stock of Ali. This prince expelled the Oozbegs from Khorassan, which has ever since been an integral portion of the Persian territories. Two of his successors were not unknown to their contemporaries in England. Shah Tamasp emerged from the obscurity that habitually envelopes the history of the East through the slights he offered to our countryman Anthony Jenkinson, while Abbas the Great had the good fortune to command the services of the two distinguished brothers, Sir Robert and Sir Anthony Shirley. The Souffavean dynasty ceased in 1722 with the abdication of Shah Hosein in favour of Mahmood of Kandahar.

Although the star of Sheibani Khan waned before that of Shah Ismael, his son Timour Sooltan, as we have seen, became sufficiently powerful to dispossess Baber of both Samarkand and Tokhara. The greatest of his descendants, however, was Abdoollah Khan, who subdued the whole of Mawaralnahr, and made Bokhara his capital. This dynasty was of brief duration, expiring in 1597, with Abdoollah's savage and rebellious son Abdool Moomeen Khan. The princes of this line showed marked favour to the priestly class, and encouraged theological studies of an abstruse character. They were also believers in a Magic Stone, which was supposed to control the elements, cure diseases, and insure victory.

The Oozbegs were not the only race who were compelled to give way before the Russian advance. Certain of Joujee's descendants had settled near Ashtarkhan, or Astrakan, at the

north-western extremity of the Caspian Sea. Here they remained in comparatively peaceful obscurity for some two hundred years, when the encroachments of their northern neighbours drove them from their homes at the mouth of the Volga. The emigrants were hospitably received by Abdoollah's father Iskander Khan, who even gave his daughter in marriage to their leader Janee Khan. The grandson of this couple ultimately ascended the throne, and founded the ninth dynasty that has ruled over Bokhara, and which was superseded towards the middle of the 18th century by Nadir Shah.

On the 23rd of April, 1558, 'Master' Anthony Jenkinson started from Moscow in company with Richard and Robert Johnson, and a Tatar Tolmach, or interpreter. These adventurous travellers were sent out by the Muscovy Company of London, to establish a direct trade with Bokhara and Samarkand, and were furnished with letters from the Czar Ivan Vasilovich, 'directed unto sundry kings and princes.' It was the 10th of August before they reached the Caspian, on which they were sorely storm-tossed until the 3rd September, when they were landed 'over against Manguslave'—Manghishlak—and were 'greatly entertained by the prince and his people,' who did not, however, improve upon further acquaintance. 'Before our departure from thence,' the tormented traveller remarks, 'we found them to be a very bad and brutish people, for they ceased not daily to molest us, either by fighting, stealing, or begging, raising the prise of horses and camels and victuals, double that it was woant there to be, and forced us to buy the water that we did drinke: which caused us to hasten away, and to conclude with them as well for the hire of camels, as for the prise of such as were bought, with other provision, according to their owne demand; so that for every camel's lading, being but 400 waight of ours, we agreed to give three hides of Russia, and foure woddin dishes, and to the Prince or Gevernour of the

sayd people, one ninth and two sevenths; Namely, nine severall things and twise seven severall things; for money they use none.'

At last, on the 14th September, the Englishmen commenced their long land journey with a caravan of one thousand camels. They had not proceeded, however, further than five marches, when they were stopped by a troop of Toorkoman horsemen of Timour Sooltan, Governor of Manguslave, who laid their hands upon various articles in the name of their Prince. Jenkinson at once rode up to the latter, and after a spirited remonstrance got from him a horse in part exchange, together with a letter of acknowledgment. Had he not acted in this fearless manner, he would have been not only robbed, but murdered—at least, so he was informed by his interpreter.

The Toorkoman chief, whom he calls the 'Soltan,' lived, he says, 'in the fields without castle or towne, and sate, at my being with him, in a little rounde house made of reeds, covered without with felts, and within with carpets.' There was with him 'the great Metropolitan of that wilde countrey, esteemed of the people as the Bishop of Rome is in most parts of Europe.' At this encampment the English travellers were regaled with horse-flesh and mare's milk, but the absence of bread is particularly noticed. For twenty days they wandered through a desert, compelled every now-and-then to kill a camel or a horse for food, and finding no water except in old deep wells, when it was generally brackish, and even salt, and sometimes two or three days elapsed without a well of any kind being met with.

On the 5th October, the caravan struck a gulf of the Caspian (?) where excellent water was obtained, and where the 'King of the Turkomans customers' examined the merchandise, and 'tooke custome, of every twenty-five one (four per cent.) and seven-ninthes'—that is, sixty-three separate articles.

Into this gulf the Oxus, according to Jenkinson's informant, formerly emptied itself, but there is evidently some confusion in this statement. The Oxus at one time no doubt discharged itself into Balkan Bay, but Jenkinson must have alluded to Kara Boghaz Bay, if it was really the Caspian Sea at all, unless, indeed, he referred to the Gulf of Kindelinsk or Kinderli, which Bruce regarded as the outlet of the ancient Oxus. The last supposition, however, is irreconcilable with the route laid down by our traveller, which, though ill defined, still gives the exact number of eleven days from the Toorkoman 'custom-house' to Urghunj, of which seven seem to have been spent in the Castle of Azeem Khan. Perhaps the true solution of the difficulty might be found in reading Aral for Caspian, and in regarding the Aibugir Gulf or Lake, as the point that was 'struck' after three weeks wandering in the desert. Urghunj is represented to have been only two days' journey from Sellizure, and not more than five days from the gulf.

Be that as it may, the caravan is stated to have arrived on the 7th at a place misnamed Sellizure or Shayzure, where the castle of Azeem Khan, the governor of the Urghunj district, stood on a considerable eminence. It seems to have been built of mud, and boasted of neither strength nor beauty. The people around were poor and knew nothing of commerce. The low-lying lands to the southward were well cultivated, and produced corn, rice, and fruit in abundance, but the water used for irrigation was drawn entirely from the Oxus, and the volume of that river had consequently been diminished to a serious extent.

Here the travellers remained, content with their reception, until the 14th, and on the 16th they entered Urghunj, after paying a poll-tax upon every man, horse, and camel in their company. This town was situated in a plain, and surrounded by mud walls, four miles in circuit. 'The buildings within it

are also of earth, but ruined and out of good order: it hath one long street that is covered above, which is the place of their market. It hath been wonne and lost four times within seven yeeres by civill warres, by meanes whereof there are but few merchants in it, and they very poore, and in all the town I could not sell above foure kerseis.' The country between Urghunj and the Caspian is said to have belonged to Azeem Khan and his five brothers, Toorkoman chiefs, always at feud with one another.

When not engaged in a foray, these magnates solaced themselves with the toilsome pleasures of the chase, and were particularly partial to hawking—the quarry being wild horses. 'The hawkes are lured to sease upon the beasts neckes or heads, which with chafing of themselves and sore beating of the hawkes are tired: then the hunter, following his game, doth slay the horse with his arrow or sword. In all this lande there groweth no grasse, but a certaine brush or heath, whereon the cattle feeding become very fat. The Tartars never ride without their bow, arrowes, and sword, although it be in hawking or at any other pleasure, and they are good archers, both on horse-backe and on foote also. These people have not the use of golde, silver, or any other coyne, but, when they lacke apparrell or other necessaries, they barter their cattell for the same. Bread they have none, for they neither till nor sowe: they be great devourers of flesh, which they cut in smal pieces, and eat it by handfuls most greedily, and especially the horseflesh.

'Their chiefest drink is mare's milke soured, and they wil be drunke with the same. They have no rivers nor places of water in this countrey, until you come to the aforesaid gulf, distant from the place of our landing twenty days' journey, except it be in wels, the water whereof is saltish, and yet distant the one from the other two daies journey and more. They eate their meate upon the ground, sitting with their legs

double under them, and so also when they pray. Art or science have they none, but live most idlely, sitting round in great companies in the fieldes, devising and talking most vainely.'

Jenkinson and his companions were detained at Urghunj till the 26th November, and on the 7th December halted at Kait Castle. The Christians in the caravan were here in great peril of being despoiled of their goods by 'Soltan Saramet,' but in the end he deferred to the more moderate counsels of his brother of Urghunj, and contented himself with taking a Russian hide for each camel. When again involved in the desert they were alarmed by rumours of robbers being abroad under an exiled prince, who maintained themselves by plundering defenceless travellers.

In the caravan it chanced that there were several Hajees, or pilgrims returning from Mecca, who resorted to divination to ascertain whether the threatened danger would overwhelm them, or pass over. For this purpose 'they tooke certaine sheepe and killed them, and took the blade bones of the same and first sodde them and then burnt them, and tooke of the bloode of the said sheepe, and mingled it with the powder of the said bones, and wrote certaine characters with the saide blood, using many other ceremonies and wordes, and by the same divined, and found that wee shoulde meete with enemies and theeves (to our great trouble), but should overcome them, to which sorcerie I and my companie gave no credit, but we found it true.'

The robbers came on boldly enough till Jenkinson and his companions, who were armed with muskets, emptied several saddles. A desultory skirmish then ensued, which lasted till nightfall, when a truce during the hours of darkness was concluded with mutual consent. The rogues, however, were too knowing for the honest men, and cut them off from the water. In the course of the night also they hailed the leader of the

caravan, and bade him surrender the Christians and their goods, and depart in peace. He proved loyal, however, to his trust, and even a Hajee, who had been taken prisoner, refused to give any information about them. On the following morning the caravan was permitted to proceed without further molestation on giving twenty times nine several things together with a camel to carry the plunder.

It was with infinite satisfaction the travellers at last reached the banks of the Oxus, having been without water for three days. All the next day they halted and rested their weary animals, 'making merry with our slaine horses and camels.' Being still alarmed about thieves, they struck off into the desert again for the space of four days, when they came to a well of brackish water, and had to kill some of their beasts of burden to avoid being famished.

On the 23rd December they entered the famous city of Bokhara. 'This Boghar,' says Master Anthony, 'is situated in the lowest part of all the land, walled about with a high wall of earth, with divers gates into the same; it is divided into three partitions, whereof two parts are the king's, and the third part is for Marchants and markets, and every science hath their dwelling and market by themselves. The citie is very great, and the houses for the most part of earth, but there are also many houses, temples, and monuments of stone, sumptuously builded and gilt, and especially bathstones so artificially built that the like thereof is not in the world: the manner whereof is too long to rehearse.

'There is a little river running through the middest of the said Citie, but the water thereof is most unholsome, for it breedeth sometimes in men that drinke thereof, and especially in them that be not there borne, a worme of an ell long, which lyeth commonly in the legge, betwixt the flesh and the skinne, and is pluckt out about the ancle with great art and cunning,

the surgeons being much practised therein, and if shee breake in plucking out, the partie dieth, and every day she commeth out about an inch, which is rolled up, and so worketh till she be all out. And yet it is there forbidden to drinke any other thing than water and mare's milke, and whosoever is found to breake that law is whipped and beaten most cruelly through the open markets, and there are officers appointed for the same, who have authoritie to goe into any man's house, to search if he have either aqua vitæ, wine, or brage, and, finding the same, doe breake the vessels, spoile the drinke, and punish the masters of the house most cruelly; yea, and many times if they perceive but by the breath of a man that he hath drunke, without further examination he shall not escape their hands.'

Truly a mighty reformation since the jovial days of Timour, or even of Baber. The strict observance of this law was enforced by the High Priest, who was more feared even than the king. Jenkinson adds that the people of Bokhara hated the Persians, and called them 'Caphars,' or unbelievers, because they suffered their moustaches to grow, and this seems to be all he knew as to the difference between Soonees and Sheeahs.

'The king of Boghar,' we are told, 'hath no great power or riches, his revenues are but small, and he is most maintained by the Citie; for he taketh the tenth piece of all things that are there solde, as well as by the craftsmen as by the marchants, to the great impoverishment of the people, whom he keepeth in great subjection, and, when he lacketh money, he sendeth his officers to the shoppes of the sayd Marchants to take their wares to pay his debts, and will have credite of force, as the like he did to pay me certaine money that he owed me for nineteen pieces of Kersey.'

There was no gold coin in the realm. The silver coin was a piece equivalent to twelve pence of English money, and 120 copper coins, called Pooles, were of the same value. Notwithstanding

its manifest inconvenience, the copper currency was most employed even in comparatively large transactions, because the silver was frequently tampered with by the king, who caused it to 'rise and fall to his most advantage every other moneth, and sometimes twise a moneth, not caring to oppresse his people, for that he looketh not to reigne above two or three yeres before he be either slaine or driven away to the great destruction of the countrey and marchants.'

Personally, the representative of the Muscovy Company of London had no great reason to complain of his reception at court. The Khan even showed him much attention, and invited him to exhibit his skill as a marksman, condescending himself to enter the lists against him. More than this, on being informed of the attack made upon the caravan in the desert, he despatched a body of soldiers in search of the robbers, of whom several were killed and four taken prisoners, two of whom had been wounded by the English guns. 'And after the king had sent for me to come to see them, he caused them all four to be hanged at his palace gate, because they were gentlemen, to the example of others. And of such goods as were gotten againe, I had part restored to me, and this good justice I found at his hands.'

For all that, 'before my departure he shewed himselfe a very Tartar; for he went to the wars owing me money, and saw me not payed before his departure. And although, indeed, he gave order for the same, yet was I verie ill satisfied, and forced to rebate part and to take wares as payment for the rest, contrary to my expectation: but of a beggar better paiment I could not have, and glad I was so to be paid and despatched.'

Bokhara was at that time a great resort for merchants from India, Persia, and Russia. In bygone days there had also been much intercourse with Cathay, but this had of late been interrupted by constant wars on the borders between the Moham-

medan Kossaks and the Tatars of Tashkend and Kashgar. Caravans were, besides, liable to be plundered by nomad tribes, and the journey oftentimes occupied nine months. Trade had consequently dwindled away, though small quantities of musk, rhubarb, satins, damasks, &c., &c., were occasionally imported into Bokhara. One of Jenkinson's companions, Richard Johnson, was informed that 'ships may saile from the dominions of Cathaia unto India. But of other waies, or how the seas lie by any coast hee knoweth not.' The religion of the Chinese, according to Tatar report, was 'Christian, or after the manner of Christians'—it was, of course, Buddhism.

'The Indians,' we learn, 'doe bring fine whites, which the Tartars do all roll about their heads, and al other kinds of whites, which serve for apparell, made of cotton, wooll, and crasko; but gold, silver, precious stones, and spices, they bring none. I enquired and perceived that all such trade passeth to the ocean sea, and the vaines where all such things are gotten are in the subjection of the Portingalls. The Indians carie from Boghar againe wrought silkes, red hides, slaves, and horses, with such like, but of kerseis and other cloths they make little accompt. I offered to barter with marchants of those countreis which came from the furthest parts of India, even from the countrey of Bengala, and the river Ganges, to give them kerseis for their commodities, but they would not barter for such commodities as cloth.

'The Persians do bring thither Craska, woollen cloth, linnen cloth, divers kindes of wrought pide silks, Argomacks, with such like, and do carie from thence redde hides, with other Russe wares, and slaves which are of divers countreis; but cloth they will by none, for that they bring thither themselves is brought unto them, as I have enquired, from Aleppo in Syria and the parts of Turkie. The Russes doe carie unto Boghar redde hides, sheepe skinnes, wollen cloth of divers

sorts, woodden vessels, bridles, saddles, with such like, and doe carie away from thence divers kindes of wares made of cotton, wooll, divers kinds of silkes, Crasca, with other things, but there is but smal utterance.'

Disappointed in his expectation of being able to open a lucrative trade with the far East through the medium of Russia and Bokhara, Jenkinson turned his face homewards on the 8th March, 1559, accompanied by ambassadors from Bokhara and Balkh to the Czar Ivan. On the 25th the caravan, consisting of 600 camels, reached Urghunj, where they remained till the 2nd April, when they started afresh, their numbers swollen by envoys from the Toorkoman chiefs, and on the 23rd found themselves once more at Manghishlak on the shores of the Caspian.

The old bark was moored where they had left her, but had been stripped of sails, rigging, boats, and anchors. While the Englishmen were scheming how to convert a cart-wheel into an anchor, a vessel put into the harbour and provided them with a few necessaries. When all was ready they set sail—'I and the two Johnsons being Master and Mariners ourselves, having in our barke the said six Ambassadors and twenty-five Russians who had beene slaves a long time in Tartarie, nor ever had before my cumming libertie or meanes to get home, and these slaves served to rowe, when neede was.' A storm, however, suddenly arose, their cable parted, and their anchor was lost. In order to escape being driven on to a lee shore, they endeavoured to gain an offing, but at last took shelter in an oozy creek, where they 'lived in great discomfort for a time.'

When the wind had lulled they made for their former anchorage and fished up the lost anchor, the Tatars marvelling how they knew where to find it beneath the waters. 'Note,' cries the honest Englishman with pardonable pride, 'that during the time of our navigation wee set up the redde crosse of

Saint George in our flagges, for honour of the Christians, which I suppose was never seene in the Caspian Sea before.'

Astrakhan was reached on the 28th May, after much peril and distress, and Moscow on the 2nd September, 'and on the fourth day I came before the Emperour's Maiestie, kissed his hand, and presented him a white Cowes taile of Cathay and a drumme of Tartarie, which he well accepted. Also I brought before him all the Ambassadors that were committed to my charge, with all the Russe slaves; and that day I dined in his Maiestie's presence, and at dinner his Grace sent me meate by a Duke, and asked me divers questions touching the lands and countreis where I had bene.'

CHAPTER VIII.

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY: NADIR SHAH.

BERNIER AND THE TATAR AMBASSADORS AT THE COURT OF AURUNGZEB—A TATAR HEROINE—ROUTE FROM KASHMEER TO KASHGAR—TRAVELS OF BENEDICT GOËS AND OTHER MISSIONARIES — ABOU'L-GHAZEE KHAN — KHIVA AND BOKHARA IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY—NADIR SHAH—ENGLISH TRAVELLERS—TRADE—DECADENCE OF PERSIA.

THE annals of Central Asia in the 17th century are stained with the useless bloodshed that characterizes the incessant feuds of petty States submerged in barbarism, and regarding arms and the chase as the only honourable employment for free men. A savage fanaticism passed current for religion, and the capricious will of a narrow-minded and irresponsible despot dispensed with the usual forms and machinery of government. For the rest, what has been written touching the social usages of the Tatars and Moghuls during the previous three centuries will apply, with very slight variation, to the manners and customs of the Oozbegs and Toorkomans down to quite a recent period.

Bernier relates how about the year 1661 the Khans of Oozbeg Tatary sent ambassadors to Aurungzeb to congratulate him on having finally triumphed over his brothers. The real object, however, of this mission was to efface whatever feelings of resentment might have been roused by the coalition of the Oozbeg Chiefs whom he had shut up in Balkh, whence he effected a difficult and disastrous retreat. They came not empty-handed, but brought as presents 'some boxes of choice lapis lazulus, divers camels with long hair, several gallant horses, and some camel-loads of fresh fruit, as apples, pears, raisins, and

melons (for it is chiefly Usbec that furnishes these sorts of fruit, eaten at Dehli all the winter long); and many loads of dry fruit, as prunes of Bokhara, apricots, raisins without any stones that appeared, and two other sorts of raisins, black and white, very large and very good.'

According to that amusing traveller, there was no 'more avaricious and uncleanly nation' than the Tatars, on the surface of the earth. The ambassadors grudged to spend the money that was allowed by Aurungzeb for their maintenance, and 'lived a very miserable life,' altogether unworthy of their position. They were ignorant even of the history of their own people. On one occasion Bernier dined with them. 'They are not,' he remarks, 'men of much ceremony; it was a very extraordinary meal for such a one as I, it being mere horse-flesh; yet for all this I got my dinner with them; there was a certain ragout which I thought passable, and I was obliged to express a liking of so exquisite a dish, which they so much lust after. During dinner there was a strange silence: they were very busy in carrying in with their whole hands, for they know not what a spoon is; but after that this horseflesh had wrought in their stomachs, they began to talk, and then they would persuade me that they were the most dextrous at bows and arrows, and the strongest men in the world. They called for bows which are much bigger than those of Indostan, and would lay a wager to pierce an ox or my horse through and through.'

His entertainers likewise told him a tale of a Tatar maiden who slew, with arrows and sabre, from twenty to thirty Indians who had plundered her native village in her absence, and carried off captive her aged mother. The old woman warned them that they would do well to let her go free, for it would fare badly with them when her daughter came to know how they had treated her. They naturally laughed at her threats, but had not gone far before the Tatar Brindomart was seen 'prick-

ing o'er the plain.' While yet at a great distance she began to discharge her fatal arrows with unerring aim, and, when her quiver was exhausted, charged them sword in hand and rescued the beldame.

Bernier accompanied Aurungzeb to Kashmeer, where he made the acquaintance of some merchants from Kashgaria, who informed him that the quickest and easiest route to their country lay through Great Tibet. They themselves, however, proposed to return home by way of Eskerdon—Iskardo—in Little Tibet, and expected to occupy forty-four days in travelling to Kashgar, described as 'a small town, once the seat of the king of Kacheguer, which is now at Jourkend—Yarkund—lying somewhat more to the north, and ten days journey distant from Kacheguer.' The traders added that from that town to 'Katay,' on the north-west of China, by way of Khoten, was a distance of two months constant travel, by very difficult roads, and that there was 'a place where, in what season soever it be, you must march for about a quarter of a league upon ice'—across a glacier.

In the course of the 17th century several Jesuit Missionaries made their way from India to China, in the hope of converting the heathen. The most notable of these was Benedict Goës, who started from Agra in 1602, and travelled by way of Lahore, Attock, and Peshawur to Kabul, where he was detained for a considerable time. At length resuming his journey, he crossed the Hindoo Koosh by the Parwan Pass, ascended the valley of Badakhshan, and traversed the Pameer Steppe to Sarikol, being the first European since Marco Polo who had visited those regions. Thence he proceeded to Yarkund by the Chichiklik Pass and the Tangitar valley, and so passed on to the fulfilment of his bootless mission.

Half a century later the two Jesuit Missionaries Dorville and Grueber penetrated to China from Bengal, and in 1714 another Jesuit, Desideri, adopted Kashmeer as his starting

point. There is not much, however, that is either very entertaining or instructive in the records of their wanderings, or of a nature to arrest the attention of the general reader.

Of far greater interest is the 'Genealogical History of the Tatars' commenced by Abou'l-Ghazee Khan, after his abdication of the throne of Khwarezm, and completed by his son and successor. Abou'l-Ghazee Khan was born at Urghunj in 1605, and by his mother's side descended in a direct line from Chinghiz Khan. He became King of Khwarezm in 1645, and after a glorious reign of twenty years voluntarily abdicated in favour of his son Anou Shah Mohammed Bahadoor Khan. In his leisure hours after retiring from the management of public affairs, he applied himself with great diligence to the compilation of his History, and on the visible approach of death earnestly commended its completion to his son, who faithfully acquitted himself of the sacred trust. This useful work was translated and annotated by Bentinck, a learned Dutch Orientalist, whose notes, published at Leyden in 1726, convey a lively impression of the general condition of Central Asia at that period.

The description of the kingdom of Khwarezm applies almost equally well to that of the Khanat of Khiva at the present day. In length it extended 440 miles from north to south, and in breadth 340 from east to west. It consisted for the most part of wide plains of sand, fringed by a few ranges of hills, and cultivated only in the vicinity of the Jyhoon and its numerous estuaries and canals. Of pasture land the extent was considerable, and in the irrigated districts fruits and cereals yielded abundant crops. Vines grew well in certain localities, and the melons were famous throughout all Asia. The capital city, Urghunj, had fallen so much to decay that it made 'but a pitiful figure, being no more than a great scrambling town about a league in compass.'

The kingdom of Bokhara, or, as it was then called by

European writers, Bucharia or Bogaria, was in a very flourishing condition. Strictly speaking, it was divided into two portions, Great Bucharia and Little Bucharia. The latter is at present represented by Eastern Toorkestan, but the former was roughly calculated to extend 760 miles from east to west, and 720 from north to south, and comprised all the country enclosed between the Jyhoon and the Syhoon—or the Amou and Syr.

Nature, we read, 'has denied nothing to this fine country to make living in it agreeable. The mountains abound with the richest mines; the vallies are of an astonishing fertility in all sorts of fruits and pulse; the fields are covered with grass the height of a man; the rivers swarm with excellent fish; and wood, which is so scarce all over Grand Tartary, is found here in great plenty in several parts. In short, it is the best cultivated and inhabited of all the Northern Asia. But all these things are of very little use to the Tartar inhabitants, who are naturally so lazy that they would rather go steal, or rob and kill their neighbours, than apply themselves to improve the benefits which nature so liberally offers them.'

The inhabitants consisted of three distinct races, who kept aloof from one another. The most industrious were the Sarts, or descendants of the early Aryan population, and who are best known by their Persian appellation of Tajeeks. The Toorks, or Toorkomans, originally from Toorkestan, were of tall stature and robust frame, with square flat faces, and of a swarthier complexion than their brethren who settled in Anatolia and founded the Empire of Turkey in Europe.

The lords of the land, however, were the masterful Oozbegs, who, nevertheless, had been forced to give way before the superior numbers, discipline, and intelligence of the encroaching Muscovites. Though possessing fixed habitations, they were much given to wandering from place to place, carrying with

them all their effects of any value. Their houses, indeed, were chiefly 'a dome of laths, and o'er it felts were spread.' They were armed with bow and arrows, a lance, a sword, a javelin, occasionally with an arquebuss, and generally with a buckler slung at their back—the chiefs in war time wearing coats of mail. In these respects, indeed, there was little difference between the Oozbegs* and the partially conquered Toorkomans. Both were men of blood, and lived by rapine, scorning the arts of peace and the tillage of the soil, which were left to the Sarts, dwelling in towns and villages, and to Persian slaves torn from their homes in Khorassan. Their favourite dishes were then, as now, roast horse-flesh and mutton pillao, washed down by 'Kumeez' and arrack, both made from mare's milk.

The Toorks, or Tatars,—for they belonged to the same stock—were divided into five Aimaks or tribes; the Uigurs; the Kankli Tatars, near the Ili; the Kipchaks, ancestors of the Cossacks of the Ural; the Kall-Atz, in Mawaralnahr; and the Karliks, on the mountains whence the Moghuls of Chinghiz issued forth upon the plains. The Kankli Tatars are said to derive their name from the inventor of wheeled carriages for carrying off plunder, which from the creaking of their wheels were called Kunnecks, and their ingenious deviser Kankli. The epithet Kalmuk seems to have been given in derision by the Mohammedan Tatars to those who still adhered to idolatry, just as the Russians fell into the habit of speaking of the indepen-

* In 'Lalla Rookh' the minstrel-prince sings of the

> 'Chiefs of the Uzbeck race
> Waving their heron crests with martial grace;
> Turkomans, countless as their flocks led forth
> From the aromatic pastures of the North;
> Wild warriors of the turquoise hills—and those
> Who dwell beyond the everlasting snows
> Of Hindoo Kosh in stormy freedom bred,
> Their fort the rock, their camp the torrent's bed.

dent Kozzaks as Kirghiz, by which name the Persians contemptuously designated all the nomad tribes, as if dwellers in Khourgah, or asses' stables.

The Tatar horses, we are assured, 'make but a sorry appearance, having neither breast nor buttocks, the neck long and straight like a stick, and the legs very high, and no belly. They are, besides, of a frightful leanness: for all this, they are exceeding swift and almost indefatigable. They are easily maintained; a little grass, though ever so indifferent, and even a little moss, satisfying them in case of need: so that these are the best horses in the world for the use the Tatars make of them.'

Pushing poetic license to the verge of reckless audacity, Mr Matthew Arnold, in his spirited but singularly anachronistic poem, 'Sohrab and Rustum,' picturesquely delineates the Tatar hordes as they existed some centuries subsequent to the historical romance he has selected for the pastime of a Muse capable of far greater flights. It is thus he describes the auxiliaries of Sohrab:—

'From their black tents, long files of horse, they stream'd:
As when, some grey November morn, the files,
In marching order spread, of long-necked cranes
Stream over Casbin, and the Southern slopes
Of Elburz, from the Aralian estuaries,
On some froze Caspian reed-bed, Southward bound
For the warm Persian sea-board; so they stream'd.
The Tartars of the Oxus, the King's guard,
First, with black sheep-skin caps, and with long spears:
Large men, large steeds: who from Bokhara come
And Khiva, and ferment the milk of mares.
Next the more temperate Toorkmans of the South,
The Tukas, and the lances of Salore,
And those from Attruck and the Caspian sands;
Light men, and on light steeds, who only drink
The acrid milk of camels, and their wells.
And then a swarm of wandering horse, who came
From far, and a more doubtful service own'd;

The Tartars of Ferghana, from the banks
Of the Jaxartes, men with scanty beards
And close-set skull-caps ; and those wilder hordes
Who roam o'er Kipchak, and the Northern waste,
Kalmuks, and unkemp'd Kuzzaks, tribes who stray
Nearest the Pole, and wandering Kirghizzes,
Who came on shaggy ponies from Pamere.'

Bokhara, the capital city, appears to have undergone little change between the date of Anthony Jenkinson's visit and the close of the 17th century. According to Abou'l-Ghazee Khan, the name is derived from a Moghul word 'Buchar,' signifying 'a learned man,' because all such as desired to study grammar and science were wont to repair to Bokhara. Unfortunately for this derivation, the town possessed that name ages before either mosque or medresseh was erected within its walls, or the Moghul had swept down from his native mountains,

As when a vulture on Imaus bred,
Whose snowy ridge the roving Tartar bounds,
Dislodging from a region scarce of prey,
To gorge the flesh of lambs, or yearling kids,
On hills where flocks are fed, flies towards the springs
Of Ganges or Hydaspes, Indian streams.

The town is still pictured as begirt with a wall of earth faced with turf, and divided into three parts, in one of which stood the Ark, or Royal Palace; in another, the chief public offices and buildings; and in the third, the shops and dwellings of the industrial population. As usually happens in the East, each calling had its own peculiar quarter or bazaar, and the site of the city on the great caravan route between Eastern and Western Asia was bearing its legitimate fruits. The humbler habitations, however, were built of mud, stone being reserved for more stately edifices, and the water was execrably unwholesome. Traders, too, complained that, although the customs duties did not exceed the two-and-a-half per cent. sanctioned by the Koran, they were subjected to such vexation and oppres-

sion, that their business was seriously injured. In like manner the philo-Russian Bentinck says that nothing is wanting to the city of Samarkand to enjoy a very considerable commerce, but to have other masters and neighbours than the Mohammedan Tatars.

Samarkand, however, was a much finer town than Bokhara. Many private houses were built of stone from the neighbouring quarries, and some of the Mosques and Medressehs were really handsome structures. The palace, indeed, had suffered from neglect, but the lofty dome over the tomb of Timour, and the observatory erected by Ooloogh Beg, one of Timour's numerous grandsons, failed not to excite the admiration of strangers. The beautiful environs and the fertile valley of the Zarafshan retained all their attractions, 'and all, save the spirit of man, was divine.'

Another town of importance was Balkh, at that time the residence of an Oozbeg Chief who ruled over Badakhshan. The country around was well cultivated, and produced silk of superior quality. The silken manufactures of Balkh likewise bore a high reputation, and the people were said to differ from the inhabitants of most other cities of Central Asia in that they were less prone to theft, and more given to honest industry. The houses were for the most part built with brick or stone, and the lofty ramparts of earth that surrounded the city were faced with stone. Situated on an affluent of the Amou and on the direct caravan route between India and Persia, Balkh enjoyed the advantages of a brisk trade, and as a duty of two-and-a-half per cent. was levied on all goods entering or issuing from the gates, the public revenue must have been considerable. The castle was a spacious and substantial structure,—the neighbouring quarries of marble furnishing the materials.

The eighteenth century was destined to witness a revival of the massacres that characterized the triumphs of Chinghiz

and Timour. In the province of Khorassan and at no great distance from Kelat, the ancient Artacoana, and in the year 1687 or 1688, a man of the Affshar tribe, named Imam Kouli, possessed of neither riches nor rank, became the father of one of the most savage conquerors even Asia has produced. Nadir Kouli, or Slave of the Wonderful, that is, of God, began life as a robber, and early distinguished himself by the murder of an uncle who had been appointed Governor of Kelat, the possession of which city with its fertile table land was the motive and recompense of the crime. His unscrupulous audacity having recommended him to the notice of Shah Tamasp, then King of Persia, he was taken into the royal service, and honoured with the title of Khan.

Courtier-like, Nadir now transferred his allegiance from The Wonderful One to his earthly master, and called himself with hypocritical humility Tamasp Kouli Khan. His aptitude for war was speedily made manifest by the expulsion of the Afghans from Persia, and the grateful or timid monarch, in recognition of his valour and ability, conferred upon him the governments of Khorassan, Mazanderan, Seistan, and Kerman, thus raising him to a position scarcely inferior to his own.

The ingratitude, or patriotism, of Tamasp Kouli Khan, was on a par with the suddenness of his elevation. His benefactor having concluded a disgraceful peace with Sultan Mahmoud, was declared unworthy to rule over Persia, and his son, barely eight months of age, was placed on the throne, with Tamasp Kouli Khan for his guardian and vicegerent. On the death of the infant, which happened very shortly afterwards, the Regent usurped the insignia of royalty, and adopted the name by which he is known in history—that of Nadir Shah.

His son Riza Kouli Meerza likewise displayed great military talent, and gave hopeful promise of being a just, merciful, and enlightened monarch, should he ever succeed to the throne.

His first feat of arms was the complete overthrow of an Oozbeg army, followed by the capture of Balkh, and the passage of the Oxus. He was checked, however, in mid-career, in 1738, by a summons from his father, who was then on the point of setting out on his murderous expedition into Hindostan. During Nadir Shah's absence, Riza Kouli Meerza ruled in his stead, fixing his seat of government at Meshed. It was at this time that Jonas Hanway visited that city, which has passed through so many vicissitudes of fortune. 'It is situated,' he wrote, 'to the north of a ridge of mountains and is well supplied with water, which is brought hither in an aqueduct from a great distance: in time of peace it is a place of great trade; caravans are employed daily from Bokhara, Balkh, Biddukhshan, Kandahar, and India; as well as from all parts of Persia. The bazaars, or market-places, are large and well-built, filled with rich merchandise, and frequented by great numbers of people of different nations. There were computed about ninety caravanserais in this city, all in good repair. Great numbers of people were sent hither by Nadir Shah from all parts of Persia, as well as from the new-conquered dominions; and all other means were used to make it a flourishing city. It is fourteen days' journey distant from Bokhara by the direct road, twenty from Balkh, twenty-six from Biddukhshan, and thirty from Kandahar.'

It is said to have been the intention of Nadir Shah to remove the seat of government permanently from Ispahan to Meshed, as better situated for a commercial emporium, and both he and his son conferred many privileges upon its inhabitants, in the hope of restoring it to its former state of prosperity. There was a time, says a writer of that century, when Meshed was 'famous for its manufactures of all sorts, such as gold and silver brocades, tapestry, rich silks, and woollen stuff, as beautiful and as dear as silks: there was,

besides, a manufacture of earthenware, which was looked upon as the best in Asia, on this side China; so that, an age ago, this city for mosques, public baths, caravanserais, bazaars, and other public structures, was not in the least inferior to any city in Persia; but the Uzbeck Tatars had so totally destroyed it, that it made but a very indifferent figure when the Shah Nadir made choice of it for the seat of his empire.'

On his return from the capture of Delhi, and the massacre and pillage of its inhabitants, Nadir crossed the Oxus, and encamped within twelve miles of the city of Bokhara. The Khan, though descended from Chinghiz, wisely preferred timely submission to useless resistance, and not only laid the insignia of royalty at the feet of the conqueror, but also gave his daughter in marriage to Nadir's nephew. The Oxus was declared to be thenceforth the boundary between the kingdoms of Bokhara and Persia, and 12,000 Oozbeg horsemen enlisted under the banners of the Shah. The conqueror then proceeded to avenge a cruel insult he had received at the hands of the Khan of Khwarezm.

Nadir had sent ambassadors to that barbarous court to demand the release of all Persians detained in slavery, but his envoys were savagely put to death, with the exception of one, who returned to him without ears or nose. The Khan boldly took the field with 20,000 men, but, learning that Nadir Shah was approaching in person at the head of 50,000, his courage failed him, and he hastily retreated towards his capital. He was overtaken, however, when only half a day's journey from its friendly walls, and, after a desperate struggle, was defeated and made prisoner. On being conducted into the presence of the victor, he sought to obtain his own pardon by accusing his Oozbeg chiefs of having murdered the Persian ambassadors without his knowledge. Nadir sternly replied that, if he had not capacity enough to govern the handful of subjects who

acknowledged him as their lord, he was not fit to live; and that, for the affront he had passed upon himself in killing his messengers, he did not deserve to die like a man—he should die, therefore, like a dog. The Khan and thirty of his principal officers were accordingly led forth to execution, and had their throats cut.

The capital city, however, still refused to open its gates, and many of the Persian slaves were butchered, lest they should betray the place to their fellow-countrymen. On the 8th November, 1739, Nadir pitched his camp on the east side of Khiva, and opened fire upon the walls with 18 cannon and 16 mortars. He also constructed wooden towers to over-top the walls, and subdue the enemy's musketry fire. The besieged had only a few field pieces, which they had taken from the unfortunate Prince Beckovich, and on a practicable breach being effected they surrendered at discretion. Two English merchants, named Hogg and Thompson, had been involuntarily immured in the beleaguered town, and on appearing before Nadir were graciously received, and promised protection for themselves and their property. A fortnight afterwards the Persian monarch withdrew from Khwarezm with 20,000 liberated slaves and 8000 Oozbeg recruits, after bestowing the Khanat on Taher Khan, a cousin of the ruler of Bokhara.

We learn from Jonas Hanway's narrative that Nadir's army, shortly before his death, was estimated at 200,000 men, a number far short of the countless hordes assigned to Chinghiz and to Timour. The hosts of his predecessors, however, were migratory nations rather than disciplined troops. For every fighting man there were probably five or six non-combatants, including the old men, the women, the children, and the slaves. In the case of Nadir Shah it was different. He went forth to scourge and to conquer, but without thought of migration or settlement. It is true that, like all Eastern conquerors, he was

encumbered with many useless followers, who may have contributed to the magnificence of his presence, but who were otherwise a source rather of weakness than of strength. Among these may be enumerated 50 black eunuchs, 200 running footmen, 1000 stirrup-holders, 10,000 koulam or royal slaves, 500 heralds, and 150 carpet-spreaders. The 2000 Beg-zadeh, or gentlemen's sons, and the 1000 sons of elders, may have served as pledges for the loyalty of their parents, and the 4000 watch-guards may possibly have deserved their title. But the main body contained 50,000 Affghans, 20,000 Affshahs, or nomads of Korassan of Nadir's own tribe, 6000 Oozbegs, 6000 Toorkomans, 6000 Balouche, probably Beloochees, and 12,000 musketeers.

Unchecked success, unlimited power, unthwarted caprice, worked out their own nemesis, and in his latter days Nadir was tormented by jealousy and suspicion. In a moment of unreasoning fury he deprived of sight his eldest son Riza Kouli Meerza. 'You have put out the eyes of Persia,' was the only reproach uttered by the submissive sufferer, and the event proved the justness of the prince's view of the instability of the empire acquired by his father. While encamped in a wide plain, a day's journey to the north-west of Meshed, Nadir conceived the mad design of massacring all the Persian soldiers in his army, and of trusting entirely to his Affghans and Toorkomans. At least, a rumour to that effect got abroad, and impelled by the motive of self-preservation Saleh Beg, the commander of the Affshah body-guard, conspired with some other officers to assassinate the tyrant, who was accordingly slain in his own tent while offering a vain resistance.

This tragic event occurred in 1747, and from that year dates the rapid decadence of Persia. The reigning dynasty belongs to the Kajar tribe, and is descended from Mohammed Hosein Khan, whose father was murdered by Nadir Shah, and

who makes an unpleasing figure in Hanway's narrative as an unscrupulous freebooter.

The gracious reception accorded by Nadir to the two English merchants found among the captive inhabitants of Khiva was consistent with the protection and encouragement that monarch systematically extended to industry and commerce. One object of his ambition was to command the navigation of the Caspian Sea, though chiefly with a view to overawe the Lesghians on the one coast and the Toorkomans on the other. For this purpose he applied to the Empress Catherine I. to send him some ship-carpenters, but her Majesty astutely replied that the only artificers of that class in her dominions were foreigners, whom she had no power to employ beyond her own territories. In this difficulty Nadir procured the services of a ship-captain named Elton, in the pay of an English company trading with Russia and Persia, whose representatives, Mr George Thompson and Mr Reynold Hogg, were the two Englishmen shut up in Khiva when taken by the Persians.

These pioneers of commerce had started from Yaik on the Ural, on the 26 June, 1740, and travelled in a direction to the east-south-east of Orenberg, a fortress then recently built as an outpost to repress the incursions of the Karakalpaks and Kirghiz, and also as an emporium for furs, gold dust, and rhubarb. On the 6th August they reached the shores of the Aral, and followed its western shore, distressed by the want of drinkable water and impeded by the ruggedness of the route. The circuit of the sea, or lake, they estimated at something over a thousand English miles, while the country they traversed is represented as abounding in wild horses, asses, and antelopes, and infested by wolves, and 'a very fierce creature called jolbart, not unlike a tyger, which the Tartars say is of such prodigious strength as to carry off a horse.'

A valley covered with brushwood and knee-deep in stagnant

water, described as the ancient channel of the Oxus, was crossed on the 1st September, and on the 5th they halted at 'Jurgantz' —Urghunj—a heap of ruins, with only one mosque remaining. Four days later the travellers entered Khiva, a town with three gates, situated on rising ground, defended by a mud wall higher than the roofs of the houses, strengthened by towers at short intervals, and surrounded by a broad ditch. The houses, however, were nothing better than mud huts, with flat roofs covered with earth. Trade, too, was at a stand-still, the inhabitants looking forward with reasonable apprehension to an early attack from Nadir Shah. Lodged in a caravanserai, the Englishmen found it difficult to dispose of a sufficient quantity of goods to maintain themselves and their cattle, although they had been compelled to pay an octroi duty of five per cent. upon the whole of their merchandise.

'The dominions of Khiva,' they contemptuously remark, 'are of so small extent that a person may ride round them in three days: it has five walled cities, all within half a day's journey of each other.' The Khan was possessed of absolute power, tempered by the ascendancy, in religious matters, of the 'Moollah Bashi,' and his annual revenue did not exceed one hundred gold ducats. His people were found to be even more cunning and treacherous than the Kirghiz. According to the rate of travelling in those days, Khiva was seventeen days from the Caspian, and thirty-three from Orenberg, each day being equivalent to forty versts, or about twenty-seven English miles.

After the submission of Khiva to Nadir Shah, the Englishmen sold a portion of their merchandise without much difficulty to the Persians, but had great trouble in getting their money. Hogg therefore remained till the 6th April, 1741, when, to avoid the Toorkomans, he directed his course to the eastern shores of the Sea of Aral. In fifteen days he reached the Syr, but on the other side fell into the hands of the Kirghiz, who

took from him everything he had, so that it was with much pain and fatigue he finally made his way to Orenberg, and thence to St Petersburg.

In the meanwhile Thompson had proceeded to Bokhara, 'a large and populous city,' situated on a rising ground, and begirt with a slight mud wall and a dry ditch. The dwelling-houses were mud hovels with flat roofs, but the mosques and caravanserais were built of brick, as also the bazaars, though many 'stately buildings' of brick and stone were in a ruinous condition. 'The place,' says Thompson, 'is not esteemed unhealthy as to air and soil; but the water is so very bad that many of the inhabitants are confined several months in the summer by worms in their flesh, which they call Rishtas: some of these, when taken out of their bodies, prove to be forty inches long.' Serpents and scorpions of an exceedingly venomous nature were unpleasantly frequent. 'The most effectual remedy they find for the immediate cure of this distemper (the sting of the scorpion) is to bruise the scorpion, and apply it to the wound.'

The Bokhariots themselves are denounced as a cruel, cowardly, effeminate, and perfidious race, but more polite and civilized than the Khivans. The Armenian prince Haiton also spoke ill of the latter, as lawless, rude, unlettered pagans, while Ibn Batuta wrote, 'I have never seen better or more liberal people than the inhabitants of Khwarezm, or those who are more friendly to strangers. They have,' he adds, 'a very commendable practice with regard to their worship, which is this: When any one absents himself from his place in the mosque, he is beaten by the priest in the presence of the congregation; and, moreover, fined in five dinars, which go towards the expenses of the mosque, and for nourishing the poor. In every mosque, therefore, a whip is hung up for this purpose.' Ibn Batuta was further astonished by the crowds of people in the streets,

who made the ground, as it were, tremble beneath their feet, while the incessant movement recalled to mind the agitated surface of a storm-vexed sea.

No doubt, these different travellers bore each faithful witness according to his lights and personal experience. The Englishman, however, would probably have gladly exchanged something of the politeness of the Bokhariots for a brisker market for his wares, but the demand for European goods was very slight, and cloth was used only for caps. The duty on imports, whether belonging to natives or to foreigners, was no more than one per cent., but ten times that rate on exports. In the rare intervals of peace, the Customs were estimated to yield one thousand ducats per annum.

On the 8th August Thompson turned his back upon Bokhara, and proceeded to Meshed by a strangely circuitous route. He first travelled for four days in an easterly direction, passing through many Oozbeg villages, and then, turning to the south, crossed the Amou at Kherki on the 16th, after traversing the inhospitable desert. Here he was constrained to pay a small duty upon his merchandise. Bending to the south-east he next reached 'Anthuy'—Andkooee—after a painful journey through a desert country, and found that he was only three days distant in a direct line from his starting-point. The whole of this district was subject to the Persians, who bought large quantities of cattle from the inhabitants.

After a detention of ten days, waiting for a caravan, Thompson got away again on the 31st, and travelled westwards through narrow valleys hemmed in by lofty mountains, and on the 6th September arrived at a place he calls Margiehab—probably a corruption of Murghab, but which was actually Merou. It is stated to be very strong, defended by a garrison of 500 soldiers, and surrounded by a double wall on which several guns were mounted, but very unhealthy in summer in consequence of

pestilential winds. It was not until the 22nd September that he arrived at Meshed, the chief town of Khorassan, and at that time the capital of Nadir's wide dominions.

'Few things,' as Sir Rutherford Alcock remarked in his comprehensive address to the Geographical Section of the British Association at Bradford, 'Few things in the retrospect of past intercourse and knowledge of each other among nations widely separated, are more remarkable than the continuous communication across the whole breadth of Asia between the east and west, which seems always to have been maintained for purposes of traffic from the earliest historic periods. No dangers of the way, no physical obstacles of mountain ranges and great rivers or deserts, no length of time nor ignorance of the geographical bearings of any portions of this area of so many thousand miles, seemed to have acted as deterrents.'

The decadence of Persia, it has been said, commenced immediately upon the death of Nadir Shah. It might, perhaps, have been more correct to say that it was greatly accelerated by that event. In any case, we have contemporary evidence to the complete dissolution of the empire acquired by the victorious arms of that adventurer, and to the appalling disorder which ensued upon his assassination. Thus we read of Khorassan, 'It was formerly the best peopled, the best planted, and the best built province in Persia, but of late the incursions of the Uzbeck Tatars have laid one half of it waste; and though for a few years they were kept in awe by the Shah Nadir, who drove them out of this country, for which he had a peculiar affection, yet it is not to be supposed, while the affairs of the Persian empire are in confusion, that they can be long restrained.'

Again, 'If we could with any probability suppose that a well-constituted government could take place, and be thoroughly established in Persia, it is very evident that in the space of a century, not only the affairs, but the very face of the country

would be changed; their great cities would be repeopled, the trade through Persia to India and Tatary would be revived, their silk works and manufactures would be restored, and multitudes of people would flock into all their provinces for the sake of the plenty which in such a situation of things they would be sure to enjoy. But as this supposition is, on the one hand, improbable, so, on the other, it is very evident that for this very reason the Persian monarchy must for a long series of years continue broken and weak; for it is by commerce only that the people of the country can become formidable; for while, on the one side, they want a naval power to maintain the sovereignty of the Caspian Sea, to which they pretend, and on the other hand have no fortresses of great strength to secure the frontiers against the Uzbeck Tatars on the north, and the Turks on the west, they will always be in danger from both those neighbours.'

As the surest remedy for this calamitous state of things, the occupation of the Caspian provinces by the Russians is contemplated with a certain degree of hopefulness, especially as tending to the overthrow of the Mohammedan heresy. 'If the feuds of Christian princes were once laid asleep, there is no improbability in the conjecture that the Russians might make themselves masters at least of some of the provinces of this empire which lie nearest to the Caspian Sea; and whenever it shall happen it may prove a beginning to much greater revolutions, since there are multitudes of Christians in the adjacent countries, who are either of the Greek religion, or very little removed from it; and if their spirits should once revive, the weakness of the Mahometans, both here and elsewhere, would be quickly seen.' As it happened, the feuds, or the indifference, of Christian princes afforded Russia the desired opportunity of seizing upon the western shore of the Caspian, a movement that has undoubtedly proved the prelude to greater revolutions, though

without aid from the co-religionists imagined by our author.

Less foresight, however, was manifested in his over-hasty congratulations on the gain to British merchants likely to arise from the opening up of a route through Russia into the heart of the Persian empire. 'We must consider ourselves,' he says, 'extremely happy in having set on foot a trade through Russia into Persia by the Caspian Sea, by which the most lucrative part of the commerce of that empire will fall into our hands, and may be justly esteemed the fruits of our great naval power, and the effects of sending our squadrons into the Baltic, which gave the Court of Petersburg such an impression of our power to assist or distress them, as it is our interest to take care that time shall never efface.'

Time's effacing fingers, however, have obliterated far deeper impressions than any that might have been made by the spirited conduct of a British Minister in the eighteenth century. Whatever share of the Persian trade is now enjoyed by this country is carried on through the Persian Gulf, the Caspian having become politically, as well as physically, a *mare clausum*. To the East India Company is due the merit of having, as it were, tapped Persia and the extreme eastern territories of the Turkish empire from the south, and thus in some degree revived the ancient commercial importance of Assyria and Mesopotamia. As the Russians bear down from the north, it becomes a matter of vital interest to Great Britain to establish a counterpoise in southern and western Asia, as the most efficient means of rescuing Persia from the state of vassalage and dependence on the Government of St Petersburg, into which she is rapidly descending. Strangely enough, it is to British capital and enterprise that Russia is primarily indebted for the possession of the Caspian, and for all the advantages resulting from that position.

CHAPTER IX.

THE RIVAL POWERS.

COMMENCEMENT OF ANGLO-RUSSIAN TRADE—QUEEN ELIZABETH'S LETTER TO SHAH TAHMASP—CHRISTOPHER BURROUGH—EXPEDITION OF PRINCE BECKOVICH CHERKASSKY—JOHN ELTON—CAPTAIN WOODROOFE—JONAS HANWAY—COUNT VOINOVICH—RELATIONS OF RUSSIA WITH KHIVA—MOURAVIEF'S MISSION—GENERAL PEROFSKI'S EXPEDITION—RUSSIA AND ENGLAND IN CENTRAL ASIA—MAJOR ABBOTT'S MISSION—HIS EXPERIENCES OF KHIVA—UNDERTAKES A DIPLOMATIC MISSION TO ST PETERSBURG—HIS ADVENTURES IN THE DESERT.

THE first English expedition to Russia was undertaken in the reign of Edward VI., under the command of Sir Hugh Willoughby, who, together with the crew of the ill-named Bona Esperanza, was frozen to death off the coast of Lapland. Richard Chancelor was more successful. As captain of the good ship Edward Bonaventure, he discovered the Bay of Archangel, whence he proceeded to Moscow, and was received with great distinction by Ivan Vasilivich, commonly called Ivan the Terrible. This prince, in 1555, concluded a treaty with England, by which important privileges were conferred upon the merchants of that country, and in the following year a Russian ambassador was sent to London.

In 1557, Anthony Jenkinson was despatched by 'the merchants of London, of the Moscovie Companie' to open up a direct trade route with Bokhara, in the hope of bartering English merchandise for 'the gorgeous silks that Samarkand supplies.' On his return voyage across the Caspian Sea, in 1560, the patriotic Englishman, as we have seen, hoisted the

red cross of St George at the peak of his frail bark, the chief result of his hazardous journey being a sort of firman from the Sultan of Hircan (Hyrcania), or Shirvan, to establish a factory in his dominions. This Abdoollah Khan, whose name is corrupted into Obdolowcan, is described as 'a prince of a meane stature and of a fierce countenance,' parelled in gorgeous array, and fond of good living—140 dishes of meat and 150 dishes of desert constituting the *menu* of the banquet at which he entertained his guest from foreign parts.

In 1561, Anthony Jenkinson had the honour of bearing a a letter from Queen Elizabeth to Shah Tæhmas, or Tahmasp, of Persia, who is styled therein 'the great Sophie, Emperor of the Persians, Medes, Parthians, Hyrcanes, Carmanarians, Margians, &c., &c.' After praying for due protection to her envoy, Elizabeth remarks in the stiff and redundant phraseology of the day: 'If these holye duties of entertainment and sweete offices of naturall humanitie may be willingly concluded, sincerely embraced, and firmely observed, betweene us, and our realmes, and subjects, then wee doe hope that the Almightie God will bring it to passe that of these small beginnings greater moments of things shall hereafter spring, both to our furnitures and honors, and also to the great commodities and use of our peoples, so it will be knowen that neither the earth, the seas, nor the heavens have so much force to separate us as the godly disposition of natural humanitie and mutual benevolence have to joyne us strongly together.' Shah Tahmasp, however, cared little for 'naturall humanitie,' and treated the English ambassador with studied neglect. Before this, however, the western coast of the Caspian had fallen into the hands of the Turks, and trade in that quarter was completely suspended.

In 1579, Christopher Burrough built a vessel on the Volga at Nijni Novgorod, and sailed in it to Baku. On his return voyage the ship was stranded off Nizabad, and a portion of the

cargo thrown overboard and lost. At Derbend, Burrough disposed of his goods to the Turks and purchased another vessel which he loaded with raw silk, but before he could reach the Volga the winter had set in, and the ship was 'cut to pieces by the ice.' The cargo was taken out and put into a boat which, in a temporary thaw, floated out to sea, where it was again frozen up. The crew then abandoned the boat, and struck across over the ice, but lost their way and were nearly starved to death, besides being shot at with arrows by the Nogai Tatars. In the end the cargo was got to Astrakhan, 'and thus ended the British Caspian commerce.'

In the reign of Queen Elizabeth, England enjoyed the exclusive privilege of importing foreign commodities into Russia. At that time, even during the continuance of hostilities, caravans—which Jonas Hanway asserts should be spelt 'kiervans'—passed unmolested between Turkey and Persia. After the suppression of Stenka Radzin's rebellion in 1671, and the recovery of Astrakhan from the Cossacks of the Ukraine, Russian and Armenian merchants procured English and Dutch cloths at Archangel, which they passed on into Persia from Astrakhan by means of wretched unseaworthy boats. A Russian factory was also established at Shirwan, but after the plunder of that province in 1721 by the Lesghians, the Russians 'almost quitted the field to the Armenians, who were more enterprising in commerce, as well as more resolute in defending their property.'

Peter the Great reduced a portion of Ghilan in 1722, but the warm moist temperature, together with the abundance of fruit, 'rendered that province the grave of the Russians,' and it was evacuated under the Empress Anne. It was not so much the coasting trade of the Caspian that Peter was anxious to command, as the route to India, China, and above all to the gold mines of 'Little Bucharia,' the exist-

ence of which had been reported by Prince Gagarin, the Governor of Siberia. With this view he despatched in 1716 an expedition of 6000 men in sixty-nine vessels, under the leadership of the Circassian Prince Beckovich, to take possession of the eastern coast of that sea. Three forts were consequently erected: St Peter's on Cape Tup Karaghan, Fort Alexander in the Gulf of Bektirli Ishan, and a third on the Krasnovodsk promontory at the entrance of the Balkan Bay.

In the following year, Prince Beckovich was sent with a force of only 3000 men against the Khan of Khiva. Marching across the Ust Urt plateau, the Prince defeated the Khivans in a pitched battle, whereupon the latter affected to tender their submission, and undertook to conduct the victors to the capital. Leading them through the most desolate tracts, they at length persuaded the Prince to break up his little army into detachments as more likely to obtain a sufficient supply of water for all. They then fell upon the scattered and exhausted troops and cut them to pieces. Prince Beckovich, it is said, refusing to kneel down, had his head hacked off with circumstances of great cruelty—it being even affirmed that he was flayed from his knees upwards, and his skin used to cover a drum. In any case, his head was stuffed with hay, and sent as a present to the ruler of Bokhara. This disaster checked the advance of Russia for a century, though the interval was usefully employed in consolidating her possessions and influence to the north of the Caspian.

So far back as the early part of the 17th century, the Don Cossacks on the Yaik, or Ural, had sworn fealty to Michael Romanof, and in 1732, the Smaller Kirghiz Horde besought the Empress Anne to protect them from their violent neighbours, the Zungarians and Kalmuks. In consequence of that application, the towns of Orsk and Uralsk were connected by a line of fortified stations, and a solid foundation laid for an

advance towards the south-east. The sagacity of Peter had recognized the necessity of first securing his footing in the north, before his ulterior designs could be safely commenced. 'Although these Kirghiz,' he is reported to have said, 'are a roaming and fickle people, their steppe is the key and gate to all the countries of Central Asia.'

In 1734, an English sea-captain, named John Elton, accompanied General Tatischef to Orenberg, to assist in the erection of a line of forts from Samara* on the Volga, right across the steppe, to Siberia, a distance of 800 English miles.

'It was presumed,' says Jonas Hanway, 'that these forts would give a check to the inroads of the neighbouring Tartars, particularly the Keergeese, and in time become a means of civilizing them.' Elton himself was sent to explore the Aral, or Blue Sea, as it is termed by the Russians, but failed to penetrate so far in that direction. For four years, however, he was employed in surveying the south-eastern frontiers and rivers, and in the execution of this duty was thrown much among the roving Tatars, as well as among the Sarts or traders from Bokhara, Tashkend, Khojend, and so forth. He thus conceived the idea that, if a safe road could be struck out, a profitable trade in woollen goods might gradually be developed, but it appeared to him, after much reflection, that the only practicable route would be from Astrakan on the north-western, to Astrabad on the south-eastern, extremity of the Capsian Sea.

In 1738, Captain Elton threw up the Russian service in disgust, and finally joined the English Company in St Petersburg. On the 14th March, 1739, he started from Moscow,

* A 'Prince of Carizme,' it will be remembered by readers of the 'Arabian Nights,' was taken prisoner by 'the Samars,' a tribe of Cannibals who devoured his companions, and only spared himself because of the love he had inspired in their Princess.

in company with Mr Mungo Graeme, and in charge of a small cargo of goods specially selected for the markets of Khiva and Bokhara. After undergoing much risk and fatigue by land and by river, the two adventurers reached Astrakan on the 14th May, and on the 21st June landed their goods at Enzelli, the port of Resht, and eight miles distant from that important city. An *ad valorem* duty of five per cent. was here levied upon their merchandise, but the Regent, Riza Kouli Khan, Nadir's eldest son, granted them a satisfactory charter, armed with which Elton returned to St Petersburg.

The British merchants in that capital induced him to draw up a memorial for presentation to the British Minister, urging the expediency of establishing factories at both Resht and Meshed. The last-named place was at that time the chief emporium of the trade between Bokhara, Tangut, Tibet, Kabul, and India, and it was thought that woollen stuffs would yield there a better profit than in Russia, where long credit had to be given, whereas in the eastern marts not only were prices higher, but goods were paid for on delivery. 'The British merchants,' it was stated, 'can never be supplanted in this trade so long as they secure a passage for their goods through the empire of Russia, and a freedom of navigation on the Caspian, both which it will be the interest of the sovereign of Russia to grant to the subjects of Great Britain.'

Elton proposed that the Company should build at Kazan one or two vessels of 180 tons each, with crews half English, half Russian, for the navigation of the Caspian, and some large boats for the transport of goods on the Volga.. At that time it took ninety-five days to convey merchandise from St Petersburg to Resht: that is, twenty to Moscow; thence thirty-five to Tzaritzin; thence again, ten to Astrakan; and thirty more to Resht, including quarantine. From Smyrna to Resht was a journey of seventy days, by way of Erzeroum, Tabriz, and

Ardebil; and from Resht to Aleppo, sixty days. The charges from London to Resht amounted to about 34 per cent. on the value set forth in the invoices, and on raw silk from Resht to London to about 36 per cent. The trade between Persia and England, however, had almost ceased to exist. By the Treaty of 1734, English merchants were authorized to convey all kinds of merchandise through Russia to Persia, on payment of three per cent. *ad valorem* in rix-dollars 'for the duty and transit of such goods;' and the like amount was exacted for goods passing from Persia to England.

The Turkey merchants naturally exerted their utmost interest to impede the new route, while those engaged in the Russian trade fiercely attacked the privileges enjoyed by the former, and declared that they were hurtful even to the commerce they were intended to foster. On the other hand, the Turkey Company complained that they had to pay £8000 a year towards the maintenance of a British Embassy at Constantinople, and of consuls and other public officers—these charges amounting in 1740 to four per cent. on their gross returns. They therefore demanded a bounty on woollen goods for exportation, together with a reduction of duty on imports of Turkish silk and grograms.

The Russian Company made no such demands, and it was open to any one to go into the trade 'on the common terms of the small fine or contribution of five pounds.' The Charter of this Company dated from the 1st and 2nd of Philip and Mary, and originally conferred upon them the monopoly of the trade with Russia. In 1741, Parliament having duly considered the claims of the two rival Companies, empowered the Russian Company to import Persian produce if obtained in exchange for British manufactures, and not purchased by money—for the latter case the penalty was forfeiture. Persian manufactures could only be sent to English ports for exportation, and might

not be worn in this country, without contravening an Act of William III., entitled, 'An Act for the more effectual employing the poor by encouraging the manufactures of this kingdom.'

The Russian Company upon this despatched agents to Ghilan with a cargo of English goods, and at the same time Mr John Elton was sent out as supercargo in the ship he had built at Kazan, with Captain Woodroofe as commander. Elton, however, almost immediately accepted service under Nadir Shah as Superintendent of the Persian coast of the Caspian, 'with design to build ships in the European manner if it should be found practicable.' This was no easy task, as might have been foreseen from his own and Captain Woodroofe's experience at Kazan. That energetic mariner relates how he laid the ship's keel and fixed stem and stern posts on the 15th January, 1741, but could find 'neither boat-builder, rigger, or sail-maker' in the place. Nevertheless, he contrived to launch the vessel, which was 65 feet in length, on the 30th May, and on 'July the 10th we stept our masts and bowsprit and set the rigging over-head.' All the following winter they were frozen up, but on the 25th April, 1741, being the coronation day of the Empress Elizaveta Petrovna, they fired a salute, drank her Imperial Majesty's health, and baptized their ship by the name of 'Elizabeth.'

When all was ready Captain Woodroofe started under full sail, at which the Russians expressed great admiration and 'represented the danger of running aground, but their apprehensions did not intimidate us.' While descending the Volga they were attacked by pirates, but on their firing into the nearest boat and mortally wounding five or six of their assailants, they were suffered to proceed without further molestation. Astrakan was reached on the 23rd May, after a voyage of twenty-eight days, and the adventurers were hospitably enter-

tained and warmly complimented by the governor and other official personages.

Peter the Great, it is true, had kept up a flotilla on the Caspian, of which the largest vessel was of a circular form and 180 tons burden. When laden, it was bound round with hawsers to prevent it from bursting and falling to pieces. But in 1742 the Russians employed only long flat-bottomed barges with square sails—the topsails to haul down upon the deck: 'with such vessels, by the help of good ground tackle, they navigate the Caspian.' The cordage was exceedingly strong, as were also the anchors, though ill-shaped and of an ancient fashion. The new anchors turned out by the famous Demidofs in Siberia are pronounced inferior to these, but the canvas procured from Yarislaw and Moscow is mentioned with commendation.

At that time very little was known of the Caspian, but it was believed that rocks and shoals were numerous. 'The natives of those inhospitable shores,' writes Captain Woodroofe, 'except the Russians, having hardly employed their imperfect navigation to any other purpose than to surprise and plunder their unguarded neighbours. Thus it was with the Tartars and Persians till the Russian army brought the one into subjection; and, awing the other, gained an entire jurisdiction over this great Mediterranean lake.' The Kalmuk Tatars were deprived of all their large boats, and permitted only to retain their small fishing craft. The 'Elizabeth,' drawing upwards of eight feet when laden, showed clearly a great advance in ship-building.

The Russian exports to Persia, chiefly for the account of the Armenians established in Ghilan, consisted of red leather, linens, woollen cloths, and European manufactures; and their imports of silk sashes embroidered with gold 'for the consumption of the Polanders,' wrought silks and stuffs, mixed with rice, cotton, a few drugs, and raw silk. 'They also

bring rhubarb, but as the Government has engrossed this article, private persons are forbid to deal in it under penalty of death.' Rhubarb was then carried into Russia by Tatars from Yakutski, who travelled through Siberia to Samara, Kazan, and Moscow.

Captain Woodroofe, acting upon instructions received from Captain Elton, still his superior, though actually in the service of Nadir Shah, carefully surveyed the Caspian Sea, and reported Balkan Bay and the adjacent islands to be a nest of pirates. Nadir, accordingly, proposed to erect a fort there to overawe the Toorkomans, but it was reserved for another sovereign and people to take that step in the interests of civilization. The scarcity of fresh water was also noticed by the English commander, for it was nowhere obtainable except in the Island of Naphtonia, so called from its naphtha springs, but which is known to the Persians as Cherrican, or Cheleken.

When the Russians first began to navigate the Caspian, about the middle of the 16th century, there was only five feet of water off the mouth of the Volga. In 1722 Peter the Great found a depth of six feet, which had doubled twenty years later and the water had become salt. At some distance from the shore no soundings could be had with a line of 450 fathoms. It was remarked that the depth within the preceding thirty years had everywhere perceptibly increased, and that the sea was making inroads on the low coast to the north-west, and at Lengarood on the south, while at Astrabad there was twelve feet of water where only fifty years before there was a ford used by donkeys. Much the same state of things was observed in Balkan Bay. According to local tradition the water rose for thirty years and then fell for a corresponding period, but Jonas Hanway was disposed to assign as a cause for the increased depth a long series of cool summers, during which the evaporation had been less than usual.

Of late years there has been a marked diminution of the volume of water in this inland sea. It was stated by Mr Delmar Morgan, at the meeting of the British Association at Bradford, that 'The Caspian Sea, in its northern part, as far as Cape Karaghan, is ill-suited to navigation, owing to its extreme shallowness. South of Cape Karaghan, as far as Balkan, the sea is deep and good anchorage abundant. The most remarkable feature of the Caspian Sea,' he continued, 'is its deposit of salt in Karabugaz Bay, which is connected with the Caspian by a strait not more than 125 fathoms wide, and four fathoms deep. The flow of water through the strait is never less than $2\frac{1}{2}$ versts (a verst equals two-thirds of an English mile), sometimes attaining a velocity of five versts per hour. The natural explanation of this phenomenon is the evaporation caused by the intense heats and the consequent diminution of the water, which can only be supplied by the flow of water from the Caspian, and the vast quantity of salt thus deposited has converted the shores into a saline marsh, where no creature can exist.' The change in the rainfall of Persia and the gradual desiccation of that country have, of course, much to do with the contraction of the area of the Caspian, just as the diminished rainfall in Toorkestan has caused the Aral to shrink within its borders since quite a recent period.

While Woodroofe was engaged in surveying the sea, Elton was occupied in the more difficult task of building ships. In Ghilan, we are told, he found timber, but no roads for its transport, while Mazanderan furnished abundance of iron ore, but no iron-smith to work it. Nothing daunted, he fished up old Russian anchors, made sail-cloth of cotton and cordage of flax, and collected a few Indians and Russian renegades, whom he placed under a ship's carpenter he had borrowed from Woodroofe. 'Thus he contended with numerous and almost insuperable difficulties; but his spirit was equal to the most arduous enterprise.'

His English employers, however, regarded all this energy as misdirected, so long as it was not employed to their advantage, while the Russian Government naturally took umbrage at his assiduity in raising up a rival power on the Caspian. The Russian Company, therefore, deputed one of their most intelligent and sagacious partners to proceed to Russia, and if necessary to Persia, to restore the balance of their affairs. He himself tells us that when he was on the point of starting from London in 1743, Mr Richard Lockwood, a Turkey merchant, made the prescient remark: 'Either you will teach the Russians how to trade, and become an object of their jealousy, if you have success in this enterprise, or you will be plundered in Persia; and in either case your trade cannot last long.' The annual value of English exports to Russia did not then exceed £220,000, while the imports from that country were estimated at only double that amount. Indeed, the cargo of broad cloth with which Jonas Hanway sailed from Astrakan was worth no more than £5000, and the venture was thought to be on a respectable scale.

It is clear that natives of India must have been engaged in considerable numbers in the Russian trade, for a Hindoo temple is mentioned among the sights of Astrakan. 'The object of their adoration was a Pagod, ugly and deformed to a degree of horror.' Some of the fruits offered to the idol were presented to the Englishman, who declined the courtesy, 'not without some melancholy reflections on the abject state to which human reason is frequently reduced.'*

* Some forty years later George Forster, in his overland journey from Bengal to England, met with a hundred Hindoo merchants, or thereabout, lodged in two Karavanserais at Herat, 'who by the maintenance of a brisk commerce and extending a long chain of credit have become valuable subjects to the Government; but, discouraged by the insolent and often oppressive treatment of the Persians, they are rarely induced to bring their women into this country.'

Failing to dispose of his wares in Ghilan, Hanway proceeded to Astrabad; but while he was vainly seeking for a market, the town was taken and pillaged by Mohammed Hosein Khan, chief of the Kajar Toorkomans and ancestor of the present Shah, Nusser-ood-deen. The place, however, was soon recovered by Nadir's troops, and Hanway, having contrived to escape from the hands of his captors, made his way to Kasvin, where he obtained from that monarch an order to recoup him for his losses. In 1744 he returned to Astrakan with a cargo of Persian silk.

The Russian Government, however, could no longer brook the resolute attitude of defiance assumed by John Elton, who had even compelled a merchant vessel of that nation to lower her flag to a Persian ship of war, which he had built for Nadir, carrying twenty three-pounders, and which was more than a match for anything then possessed by Russia on those waters. It was in vain that the Company recalled their refractory agent, who wrote to the Committee that he never conceived his building a few ships for the Shah could give umbrage to such a powerful sovereign as the Empress. British subjects, he continued, were in the habit of serving Russia by land and by sea, while many Russian subjects resided in Great Britain with the avowed purpose of becoming acquainted with the arts and sciences, and yet no foreign powers took offence. No doubt, as the Company's trade passed through her dominions, it was in the power of the Empress to put a stop to it, but in that case what was the use of a Treaty of Commerce, if the acts of a private individual could thus destroy the rights and privileges formally granted to a nation by such Treaty?

Nadir Shah, on his part, regarded the conduct of the Englishman in a very different light. By a decree of the 19th November, 1745, he positively forbade Elton to leave Persia, describing him as 'the properest of the Christians,' and confer-

ring upon him the title of Gernal Beg, or 'the Well-favoured Knight.' The latter end of this brave and energetic adventurer was very sad. Like most men of decided character, he had made many enemies, and in the anarchy that ensued upon Nadir's death he was forced to capitulate to two Persian Chiefs, against whom he had fortified his house and garden. Regardless of the solemn engagement they had taken to spare his life, these men sentenced him to be hanged, but at length so far humoured his prejudice that they suffered him to be shot, instead of ending his life on the gallows.

The Company had already ceased to exist. In November, 1746, the Empress Elizabeth issued a decree prohibiting the transit of English goods to Persia through Russia, and consequently the Company were compelled to sell their two ships on the Caspian at a great loss to Russian merchants at Astrakan. 'The Russians, however,' Jonas Hanway philosophically remarks, 'benefitted by our loss, received no small advantage from the models we left them, and by learning of us in those parts, as they had before done in St Petersburg, the use of the best materials for ship-building.' He did not, indeed, look upon the suppression of the Caspian trade as any great national loss, and it certainly appears to have been on a ridiculously small scale. Though one hundred and fifty persons were concerned in it, in the five years from 1742 to 1746, both inclusive, the total exports of British goods by this route amounted to no more than £172,623, while the imports of raw silk, according to the price paid in Persia, did not exceed £93,375.

One result of the suppression of this route was the development of the trade with China, the duty on Chinese raw silk being shortly afterwards reduced. Nadir Shah had made a feeble attempt to do business with Russia on his own account, and, as a preliminary venture, had sent 200 bales of raw silk to Moscow in charge of a trusty agent, but all manner of

obstacles were placed in his way, and the transaction proved so unsatisfactory that he was not tempted to repeat the experiment.

The only check since experienced by Russia in establishing her supremacy on the Caspian partook of the ludicrous. In 1781 a Russian squadron, consisting of four frigates and two armed sloops, anchored in the Bay of Ashrof, and extorted from Aga Mohammed, the Kajar Chief, a reluctant permission to build a factory at a point on the coast some miles distant. When the works were nearly completed the wily Persian invited the Russian Commander, Count Voinovich, and his principal officers to a grand banquet at one of his hunting lodges in the mountains, and on their arrival placed them in irons. Under the threat of the gallows, Voinovich sent off a peremptory order for the demolition of the 'factory,' which had taken the form of a fortified post mounted with eighteen guns. When the walls had been thrown down and the guns re-embarked, the Russians were released and sent back to their ships with insult and contumely.

The commercial relations of Russia with Khiva date from the 14th century, but the first official communication took place in 1557, after the reduction of Kazan and Astrakan by Ivan the Terrible, when envoys were sent by the ruler of Khwarezm to obtain for his subjects permission to trade with the Muscovites. Similar missions were despatched in 1566 and 1583, but in 1602 the Ural Cossaks descended upon the Khanat and plundered the capital. On their homeward march across the steppe, however, they were overtaken and defeated with considerable slaughter.

Twenty years later a fourth embassy proceeded to Russia on matters relating to trade, but in 1700 Khan Shamaz offered to pay an annual tribute on condition that Peter the Great rendered him aid against his rivals. The offer was accepted,

and in 1703 Peter extended his protection to the success of Shamaz, though it does not appear that he afforded any substantial support to either supplicant. In 1714 Abou'l-Ghazee's grandson, Hajee Mohammed Bahadoor Khan, sent an ambassador to St Petersburg to treat of an alliance, offering a safe route through his dominions to the western frontiers of China,—a four months' journey,—and an auxiliary force of 50,000 horse. The envoy, whose name is corrupted into Ocherbi, was 'of a lively and venerable aspect, wearing a long beard, and an ostrich feather in his turban.'

Peter is said to have listened with pleasure to his music, an accomplishment for which the Khivans were widely famed.

Only three years later occurred the ill-fated expedition of Prince Beckovich, but in 1740 Abou'l Khair, a Kirghiz Sultan of the Lower Ural, obtained possession of the throne, and was accompanied to the capital by two Russian officers, in whose presence he declared himself a vassal of the Empress Anne. This pusillanimous act raised up a rebellion headed by the Khan's own son, who established an independent principality known as the Aral State, which continued to exist until 1802.

Occupied with more serious matters, the Government of St Petersburg suffered its relations with the Khivans to remain in a state of abeyance until the year 1819, when Captain Mouravief—the captor of Kars in 1854—was sent to Khiva to propose an alliance. This mission narrowly escaped terminating disastrously. Attended only by one servant, and his whole caravan numbering no more than seventeen camels, the gallant envoy reached Il Gheldi, a fort situated some twenty-three miles from Khiva, in eighteen days from the Caspian. Here he was detained a close prisoner for forty-eight days, during which he solaced himself as well as he could by opening Pope's Iliad at hazard, with a sort of half-faith in divination. The expediency of putting him to death had more than once

been discussed, but at last the Khan consented to see him. The audience was neither imposing nor satisfactory. The Russian Envoy was conducted without ceremony into the third court of a mean building, where he found the Khan seated at the entrance of a Kibitka, or Toorkoman tent, and his dismissal was scarcely more respectful than his reception.

So far as the imperfect information he received would allow him to form an estimate, Captain Mouravief computed the number of Russian slaves then in the Khanat of Khiva at 3000, and of Persians at 30,000. A Russian in good health and about twenty-five years of age was valued at from sixty to eighty tillahs,—a tillah being worth about thirteen shillings and fourpence,—while rather less was given for a Persian. The latter were forced to become Soonees, but the Russians were very little molested in the exercise of their religion, and had even a chamber in which they placed certain pictures of saints, though it was only at night that they could obtain leisure for worship. They contrived, however, to celebrate two festivals in the year, at which they intoxicated themselves with a spirit distilled from fruits, and these orgies occasionally finished with a murder. Slaves were generally treated with cruel harshness. For slight offences they were struck across the face with a whip, and for serious misconduct had an eye put out, or an ear cut off.

The climate of Khiva appeared to the Russian envoy as rather enjoyable than otherwise. He speaks of the serenity of the atmosphere, the slight fall of rain even in autumn, the brief continuance of the winter, and the comparatively small quantity of snow, though the wind is admitted to be piercingly cold. The large, mild onions, the variety of grapes, the delicious melons, the abundance of wheat, sorgum, and millet, the flocks of sheep, the herds of cattle and camels, and the beautiful gardens, are all duly admired, if not actually coveted—though it is significantly remarked that a force of 3000 Russians would be

ample for the conquest and tenure of the country. The iron work was done in the mean time by Russian slaves, and from Russia came the copper and glass. Wheat was still ground by the hand in primitive fashion. The population was evidently under-estimated by the Russian envoy at 300,000, of whom 10,000 are assigned by him to the 3000 houses, or hovels, that constituted the town of Khiva.

The true capital was Urghunj, the population of which was considerably larger, and consisted chiefly of Sarts. There were besides, three smaller towns, and several large villages. The fortifications were everywhere insignificant, and the regular army did not exceed 12,000 horsemen,—infantry there was none,—but on one occasion the Khan marched to the Caspian at the head of 20,000 mounted warriors. The chiefs dwelt in square fortified houses in the midst of spacious gardens, built mostly of earth and without even a ditch to impede the approach of an enemy. Their chief amusements were hawking, and playing at draughts in the Russian fashion. In the matter of musical instruments, they preferred the drum, triangle, and trumpet, to all others.

Mohammed Raheem Khan, the ruler, was a man of lofty stature and robust frame, with a piercing eye. Though of a cruel, implacable disposition, he had a kindly expression of countenance, and, with his short white beard, might have been taken for a Russian. He had at that time renounced his propensity for spirits, and was content with seven wives. He lived almost permanently in a kibitka, and was satisfied with plain fare. He was fond of watching a game of chess played by his courtiers, and was warmly addicted to the chase. He would sleep mostly in the day time, and worked all night. Though maintaining the semblance of a Council, his government was purely personal, and his ministers were almost exclusively of alien extraction.

The penal code was severe and barbarous. Criminals were not unfrequently hanged by the feet till death slowly intervened.

At other times they were impaled, and endured that horrible torture for two whole days. When the bastinado was inflicted, the stick would be impartially applied to every part of the person. Any one discovered in the enjoyment of the forbidden luxury of smoking, had his mouth split from ear to ear. A slave detected in a second attempt to escape from bondage was nailed by the ear to a stake or doorpost, and there left to die of starvation. The punishment of decapitation had been abolished, and the privilege of being buried alive was reserved for heretics and ambassadors.

The Khan's revenue is put down at £160,000, but it must be borne in mind that neither Oozbegs nor Toorkomans were liable to taxation. A mint had been established, but the currency was of very limited dimensions. Business, too, seems to have been conducted in a leisurely manner. A Khivan, being asked the distance to Bokhara, made answer; 'A merchant arrives there on the seventh day,—a robber on the third.'

Nothing came of Captain Mouravief's mission, though the Khan sent some agents to accompany the Russian envoy to the head-quarters of the Commander-in-chief in the Caucasus, ostensibly to concert measures for a joint attack upon the Toorkomans, but in reality to gain time and put off the evil day. Equally fruitless was the mission of Colonel von Berg—the late Field-Marshal von Berg—who landed at Mangishlak in 1825, with an extremely small retinue, and struck boldly across the desert to Khiva. Three months later he was back in Orenberg, without having accomplished any perceptible object.

Nothing more was done for fifteen years, but in 1839 General Perofski was instructed to proceed with a strong force from Orenberg to chastise the Khivan kidnappers. Unfor-

tunately, that gallant and accomplished officer chose the winter season for his march, with a view to supply by snow the deficiency of water in the desert. The expedition consisted of 5000 picked men, with 10,000 camels for the transport of provisions and ammunition. No expense had been spared in clothing and equipping the troops, and nothing worse was apprehended than what could be endured and overcome by courage and constancy. On the 16th November divine service was solemnly performed, after which the following proclamation was read aloud at the head of each regiment:

GENERAL PEROFSKI TO THE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE.

'His Majesty the Emperor has commanded me to lead a portion of the troops under my orders against Khiva. For many years past Khiva has been sorely trying the patience of her great and generous neighbour, and courted the thunderstorm now about to discharge itself over her head. Honour and glory to all who enjoy the advantage of taking part in an expedition intended to liberate so many of our brethren, kidnapped by the enemy, and living in ignominious slavery in a foreign land. Comrades! the frost and the snow storm, and all the inevitable hardships of a prolonged march in the steppe at this inclement season await us; but every precaution has been taken to diminish the difficulties incidental to our task, and your zeal, your patriotism, and manliness will do the rest and secure success. It is for the first time that such a considerable force of the Orenburg Corps marches against the enemy; it is the first time that Russia undertakes to punish her wild and perjured neighbours of Khiva. Two months hence we shall, with the Divine assistance, be in the hostile capital, there erecting the cross which is the symbol of our faith, and offering up prayers for Czar and country. I cannot conclude without saying a word to those troops remaining at Orenburg,

in charge of their country's frontier. You are not lucky enough to share our danger and our toil; but you are none the less worthy of all honour and the gracious consideration of His Majesty the Emperor. In bidding farewell to us, you will remember that you, too, have a sacred duty to fulfil during our absence. You will remember your oath, and that you have to acquit yourselves of your service with twofold zeal now that such a large number of your comrades are detailed for a special object. In due time we shall return to you, when you will march out to give a brotherly greeting to your fellow-soldiers, coming home from distant and difficult service.'

The march commenced on the following day. The Emba, a distance of 350 miles, was reached in about thirty days, but upwards of 3000 camels had already perished, and the sufferings of the soldiers could only be compared with those that had proved fatal to the French in their retreat from Moscow. Still they persevered, and in another month had gained the oasis of Ak Boulak, to the north-east of the Karabughaz Bay. Only 2000 camels now remained, and these utterly attenuated and exhausted. The condition of the men was truly pitiable, and threatened to become much worse, as their Kirghiz camel-drivers and guides here suddenly abandoned them, carrying off in their flight no small number of those indispensable beasts of burden. The distance to the city of Khiva was still 300 miles, and it was painfully manifest that even if the mere journey could be performed, the fighting power of the troops was already destroyed. To push on any further would have been an act of sheer madness. A retreat was accordingly decided upon, and the miserable remnants of the gallant column that had so hopefully marched out from Orenberg that cold November morning, straggled back as well as they could, famished and frost-bitten, with hundreds of their comrades lying stiff and stark in the snow upon the plateau.

The time was not ripe for the conquest of the Khanat of Khiva. 'Had Russia,' observes General Abbott, 'succeeded in creeping to Khiva, the affairs of Asia must have undergone a revolution, the consequences of which would not have closed perhaps with the present or coming century; and would probably have embroiled all the principal nations of Europe in tumult and war.' He further expresses a hope that England will 'regard as a breach of mutual confidence any future encroachment of Russia upon the territories of Khaurism.'

At that conjuncture a somewhat jealous rivalry in Central Asia threatened to embitter the political relations of Russia and England. About the time that General Perofski was supposed to be at Khiva, it was in contemplation to despatch a British force across the Bamian Pass in pursuit of Dost Mohammed. This project appears to have been discussed in an interview between Baron Brunow and Sir John Cam Hobhouse, at which the Russian ambassador is reported to have said: 'If we go on at this rate, Sir John, the Cossack and the Sepoy will soon meet upon the banks of the Oxus.' 'Very probably, Baron,' replied the President of the Board of Control; 'but however much I should regret the collision, I should have no fear of the result.'

There is much reason to believe that the siege of Herat by the Persians, in 1837, was the result of Russian intrigue, and it is certain that Count Simonich, the Russian minister at the court of Teheran, took an active part in the siege operations. Not less energetically, if less openly, did Captain Vicovich labour to poison Dost Mohammed's mind, and lower the British prestige in his estimation. Admitting that the English had anticipated his own countrymen in civilization by a couple of centuries, he added that they were no longer a military nation, but simply 'the merchants of Europe.' It is true that the action of both these officers was subsequently repudiated by Count Nesselrode, but in such cases it is not unfair to apply the

old test *Cui bono?* and it is clear that these over-zealous agents had no personal interests to serve by embroiling Great Britain with Persia and Afghanistan.

After the Persians had been compelled to raise the siege of Herat, the British resident, Major d'Arcy Todd, conceived the idea of opening up direct communication with Oollah Kouli Khan, the ruler of Khiva. He accordingly sent to that potentate, in June, 1839, a handsome rifle and a complimentary letter, by the hands of a Mohammedan priest. In return, the Khan despatched an Oozbeg envoy in company with the priest, and charged him to present the British agent with 'a broken down nag,' and a letter of inquiry as to the character of the support he might expect from his new ally. The Khan subsequently told Major, now General Abbott, that he had never heard of the English until some one chanced to mention Captain Pottinger's bravery at Herat. None of his courtiers, however, could give him any information as to what manner of men they were, and he himself supposed that they were a petty tribe of the Russian nation in a state of rebellion; but, shortly afterwards, he learned that they had conquered Hindostan and invaded the kingdom of Kabul.

As the most effectual means of satisfying the Khan's reasonable inquisitiveness, Major Todd deputed his subordinate, Major Abbott, an artillery officer of exceptional intelligence and hardihood, to represent Great Britain at the court of Khiva, but the paltry gifts within his means to offer as a sample of British skill and opulence were a too common illustration of the niggardly spirit that characterizes our dealings with petty states, and our chronic unreadiness to meet unexpected contingencies. As Balzac remarks, *Le despotisme fait illégalement de grandes choses, et la liberté ne se donne pas la peine d'en faire légalement de très petites.*

The first part of the journey—for the envoy started on

Christmas Eve, 1839 — lay across mountain ranges covered with snow, and over trackless plains claimed by a Toorkoman tribe calling themselves Jamshedies, who bartered their sheep and horses for slaves, at the rate of two human beings for a horse barely worth £15 of English money. Major Abbott seems to have been much pleased with his first glimpse of desert life. 'The Toorkoman tents,' he says, 'are the most comfortable dwellings in this serene climate. A house cannot be adapted to the vicissitudes of heat and cold which mark the year. Whereas by removing a portion of the felt covering, this tent is open to the air in summer; and in winter a fire lighted in the centre makes it the warmest of retreats, all the smoke rising through the skylight in the roof: not to mention the great advantage of being able to migrate, dwelling and all, to a sunny or sheltered spot.' He enjoyed also the Toorkoman breakfast of home-made macaroni, rolled in broad thin cakes cut into strips by a sword, and stewed with *kooroot*, milk, and syrup of grape juice, followed by a mutton and bread stew.

Early marriages are the rule among these wanderers. Boys become husbands at fourteen, and girls are wives at eleven or twelve. To each young couple is assigned a separate tent, the furniture being provided by the bride according to the price that has been paid for her, and the daughter of a well-to-do Jamshedie is often worth £70 to her father, a widower being constrained to pay double that sum for his second venture in the matrimonial market. Women, however, are never permitted to eat in company with men.

The horses are famed for their endurance. A mounted messenger will cover the 360 miles that intervene between Merv and Khiva in six days, on the same animal, carrying on his crupper, 60 lbs. of barley, 20 lbs. of horse-clothing, and food and water for his own use. On the other hand, the grass was alive with venomous snakes, panthers prowled about at

night, and the tents swarmed with 'the familiar beasts which signify love.'

The once populous town of Merv was reduced to a miserable hamlet, consisting of about one hundred mud hovels clustered round a mud fort, while the population of the entire province was estimated at no more than 60,000 families spread over a plain measuring sixty miles by forty. Here the envoy was entertained by the Khaloofauh, or High Priest.

'After some discourse water and a basin were brought round, and we washed our hands, drying them, as usual, on our handkerchiefs. Then a filthy cloth of chintz, greased to the consistence of leather, was spread on the ground before us. It is considered thankless to wash from a table cloth the stains of former banquets, or to suffer a crumb to be lost. Upon the table cloth metallic trays were set, containing pilaus, hot and very greasy. Tucking up my right sleeve, I set to work, spilling half the rice into my lap, and making little way against the practised fists and elbows of the priests. As for the Khaloofauh, he showed himself a man of might in the mysteries of the table, tearing large handfuls of mutton from the bone, as a bear might claw the scalp from a human victim, and plunging elbow-deep into the hot and greasy rice. With fists greased above the wrists, we sat waiting for the water which was to wash off the slush upon our fingers, and eventually be absorbed, with a large mass of highly-scented mutton fat and gravy, by our handkerchiefs, haunting us for the rest of the day with the stale smell of pilaus.'

From Merv to Khiva the route lay across a sandy plain with an exceedingly irregular surface, high ridges and deep hollows continually alternating, with here and there patches of wormwood and camel's thorn. Wells were found only at long intervals—in one instance of 160 miles—and the water was generally brackish. Fodder for the horses had to be conveyed,

as well as food for the riders, camels being invariably employed as the beasts of burden. On the way, Major Abbott overtook a caravan bound for the same bourne as himself.

'They had brought,' he says, 'grain from Khiva, and are returning thither laden with slaves, many of whom are natives of Heraut. The whole number, men, women, and children, may be about 25. Some of the women are very decently clad, and seemed to have been in good circumstances until seized for this inhuman traffic. One poor female was mounted a-straddle upon a camel behind her master. Her child, an infant, was lodged in a grain bag hanging from the saddle. This poor wretch has an inhuman master, and is the picture of misery. Her master has lost two children to the Persians, and is trying by this horrible trade to raise money for the purchase of their freedom. But the men are chained together by the throats at night, so that rest is scarcely possible, while the contact of the frozen iron with their skin must be a torture. For them also no carriage is found, they walk the whole way, every step of which renders their captivity more hopeless.'

On the 12th day from Merv, the capital of Khiva appeared on the horizon, and a messenger was sent forward to notify the arrival of the British envoy, who was lodged for the night 'in a respectable dwelling, some little distance' outside the town, described as 'such a place as an English farmer would use as a wood or coal house.' Next morning he was conducted to a 'Palace,' nearer to the town, by the Welcomer of Guests, escorted by horsemen well mounted and armed with matchlock rifles.

'After riding a couple of miles,' Major Abbott continues, 'the town of Khiva appeared on our right, and we entered a country, laid out in gardens and dwellings of the gentry. The houses have all one character, being an enclosure of very lofty clay walls, flanked by ornamental towers at the angles, which give them the appearance of castles. This name (Gullah) they

bear at Khiva. The exterior has but one visible opening, which is the entrance, lying generally between two towers, and being a spacious gateway, flat above, and roofed throughout, to its termination in the court behind the house, or rather, within the enclosure. On one side of this, a door admits to the men's apartments, and on the other side the women's quarters are constructed. The walls, built with great regularity of rammed clay, are generally fluted, an effect given them perhaps by the hurdles of straight branches, between which the clay is supported while soft, and during the process of ramming. The gardens are surrounded by very low walls of similar construction, allowing the eye to command many estates from a single point of view.'

The house assigned to the envoy was a large building with several wretched rooms, ill-shaped, unfloored, unplastered, and without windows or chimneys. A hole in the roof let out the smoke and admitted the light. The principal room had been spread with felt, and was closed by a heavy rough-hewn door, turning on pivots. In the centre was a hearth for burning charcoal. The magnificent sum of twenty-eight shillings a-day was allowed by the Khan for his maintenance, but of this one-half was filched by the Mehtur, or Prime Minister. He dined not badly, however, off a pheasant pillao, sweetened with raisins. The butter, too, was eatable, and was made over a very slow fire, the milk being constantly skimmed. The skimmings being put into jars, in which they kept fresh for months. But the cold was intense. Liquids were instantaneously changed into solids, and, if the door was opened, towels grew rigid, though a fire was burning in the room.

The dry serene atmosphere seemed to sparkle, and at night, when all else was still, sounds of aerial music filled the stranger with wonder and delight. The cause of these fairy-like sounds was sufficiently simple and prosaic. The Khivans, it seems,

are much addicted to flying kites, formed upon two diagonals of light wood, whose extremities are connected by a tight string, thus making a square, and paper is pasted over all. To a loose string on the upright diagonal is fastened the string that holds the toy, while a tail is attached to the lower extremity. The cross-stick is then bent back like a strung bow, and fastened by a piece of string or catgut. This tight cord vibrates with the slightest breath of air, and the vibration naturally extends to the sonorous frame. As hundreds of these kites are left floating in the air all night, their combined vibrations sound like an Æolian harp.

On the second day after his arrival, Major Abbott was conducted to the presence of the Khan Hoozoorut, or Supreme Lord of Khaurism, who styled himself Father of the Conqueror of Heroes, the Father of Victory. Passing through a considerable suburb and a miserable bazaar, he at length reached the citadel, 'a poor brick building, forming an angle of the city defences. Near the gate stood the artillery of Khaurism, consisting of about twenty-two brass field-pieces, of from 6 lb. to 12 lb. calibre, very indifferently mounted upon carriages 'having wooden axles.' At the gate, the master of the ceremonies dismounted, as also the envoy, who, leaving his shoes at the door, was led into an apartment filled with officers of the court. 'The Mehtur, or Premier, a little, dark, high-featured, long-bearded man (who always reminded me afterwards of the knave of clubs), dressed in a huge Oozbeg cap and cloak of quilted chintz, said, "You are very welcome," and instantly a piece of greasy chintz was spread before me as a table cloth, and bread, raisins, loaf-sugar, and fruit were placed before me.' Among the Oozbegs it is invariably the custom to place refreshments before a visitor, before proceeding either to business or conversation. After a brief delay, the envoy was taken through dark passages to

a small inner court, in which was pitched a black felt tent, —about twenty-four feet in diameter—exactly as described by Captain Mouravief.

Oollah Kouli Khan was about forty-five years of age, of middle stature, and stoutly built, with a round face, high regular features, and an amiable expression. His eyes were long and sleepy, and his beard unusually ample for an Oozbeg, indicating a tinge of Sart or Persian blood. His manner was languid and spiritless, and he was propped up by a cushion, the only article of furniture to be seen.

'Before him a wood fire blazed up, sending its smoke and sparks through the skylight of the tent. He shifted his posture from time to time. It was always ungraceful and unkingly: sometimes cross-legged, sometimes kneeling, sometimes half reclining. His dress was a green cloak, fringed and lined with dark sables, and showing at the waist a gold chain, the exact use of which I know not. On his head was the Oozbeg cylindric cap of black lambskin. He wore no ornament, and his sole insignium of office was a large dagger in a sheath of gold, which lay before him.'

There were no guards about the tent, though the doors of the courtyard were duly guarded. Whenever the Khan wanted his *kuliaun*, or pipe, it was handed to him by his Prime Minister. According to the strict Mohammedans, smoking was Oollah Kouli Khan's only vice, for he indulged neither in snuff nor in wine, and had no more than four wives at a time. Major Abbott expresses himself pleased with his reception, though he was kept standing, in his stockings, in the attitude of 'at ease,' and had some difficulty in explaining the purport of his mission—the Persian language being even less familiar to the Khan than to himself. Notwithstanding the favour thus shown to him, he was not allowed to go beyond the grounds of his

Palace, nor was he ever visited by any of the nobles, who, besides, had very little intercourse with one another.

The Khan of Khiva, says M. Vambery, is titular cup-bearer to the Sultan of Turkey. His chief officers in 1840 were the Mehtur or Wuzeer, and the Khoosh Begi or Grand Falconer, who was also the Commander-in-Chief. The priests, from among whom were chosen the Kazis, acknowledged two heads, the Nuqueeb and the Sheik-ool-Islam. The Khan alone had power to pass sentence of death. The revenue had sensibly increased since Captain Mouravief's visit, when it was estimated at £160,000 per annum. At least, Major Abbott computes the annual receipts at £285,900, of which nearly the whole amount found its way into the private treasury of the Khan, who paid neither the police nor the salaries of official personages. Taxes were levied upon houses, upon property, and upon merchandise. The Oozbegs paid from six to thirty-six shillings on each house, and the Toorkomans and Kuzzaks one in forty, or two-and-a-half per cent., on their live stock. There were, besides, duties on imported and on liberated slaves, and upon wheat and tobacco for exportation.

The settled inhabitants were required to furnish in war time an armed horseman for every fifty chains of arable land—but there must be some mistake in these figures, and for fifty it may be safer to read 500. The Nomads were expected to equip one horseman for four families, and while on active service the pay was usually about £3 for each expedition, every man finding himself in provisions. The Oozbegs, it was calculated, could turn out 50,000 men, the Toorkomans 25,000, the Kuzzaks 25,000, and the Kizilbashes 8,000; in all 108,000; but the largest muster on record was one of 85,000 men.

The population of the Khanat was set down by Major Abbott at a little over two-and-a-half millions, and consisted of 500,000 Oozbegs, 500,000 Toorkomans—divided into 91,700

families—200,000 Karakalpaks, 500,000 Kuzzaks, 100,000 Sarts, 30,000 Kalmuks, 20,000 Kizilbashes, and 700,000 slaves, of whom 30,000 were Persians. Taking the area of the Khanat at 450,000 square miles—that is, assuming the extreme length of the kingdom at 750 miles, and the extreme breadth at 600—this would give only five-and-a-half to the square mile.

Among the wild animals and birds of the country are mentioned lions, tigers, leopards, bears, panthers, wolves, foxes, dromedaries, two-humped camels, goats, sheep like deer, but with the head of a goat and the horns of a sheep, antelopes, asses, hogs, hares, jerboas, pheasants, partridges—also the red-legged variety—quail, woodcock, snipe, swans, geese, ducks, fowls, ravens, crows, magpies (in flocks), plovers, larks, and kingfishers. Though situated in the same latitude as Rome, the Amou in Khiva is frozen for four months in the year, and in sheltered spots the snow lies in drifts five or six feet deep till quite late in the summer. But while the cold in winter is irresistible, the heat of summer is scarcely less intolerable, and sleep beneath a roof is unattainable. Even linen clothing is a burden.

In subsequent interviews the Khan grew more communicative, and gave an account of his dispute with Russia, differing in many respects from that put forth by the Government of St Petersburg. He said that, about twenty years previously, his father stopped a caravan escorted by 200 Russian soldiers, from penetrating into Bokhara from the eastern side of the Aral. At that time Khiva and Bokhara were at war with one another, and his father was reasonably apprehensive of the advantage the enemy would derive from such a potent auxiliary. The caravan was accordingly assailed by clouds of Kuzzak and Toorkoman horse, but the Russians defended themselves with such obstinate valour that they were suffered to withdraw into their own territories without further molestation. Again, in

1833, the Russians built the fort of Nuov Alexandrofski on the Mangishlak promontory under pretext of protecting the fishermen of the Emba district against the Toorkoman pirates, but in reality to obtain a standing-point whence to commence operations against Khiva.

Only three years before the arrival of the British envoy, they pounced upon a Khivan caravan, and threw into prison 550 traders. The Khan thereupon sent an ambassador to Orenberg, with a letter for the Czar, with a view to negotiate an exchange of prisoners. The Governor of that province, however, refused to enter into any negotiations, or to liberate a single prisoner, until every Russian captive in Khiva was unconditionally set free, and no notice was taken of the Khan's letter to the Emperor Nicholas. Another envoy was then despatched, with six Russians, who were to be exchanged for a like number of Khivans. This time the envoy's brother was detained as a hostage, and not a single Khivan was released in return for the Russians. A third time the Khan essayed a pacific overture, and set free 110 captives, who were accepted without a word of thanks and without the slightest reciprocity of action. He felt assured, therefore, that the Russians meant mischief, and were only waiting for the clearing away of the snow.

The Father of Victory even exhibited, with ludicrous reverence, a six-pounder ball which the Russians had fired at a body of Toorkoman cavalry, who 'would have swept the Russians off the face of the earth, only for the cold which froze them to their saddles,' while the others sat round a blazing fire and discharged these 'deadly missiles.' The Khivan force detailed to encounter General Perofski, had he succeeded in struggling through the snows of the Ust Urt, suffered horribly from the cold. Many of the men lost one or both hands, one or both feet, the ears, the nose, the lips, and even the tongue, which

protruding in the night time would be frozen beyond recovery. Something in the spirit of the British Prince, Caradwg—Caractacus—at Rome, the Khan one day piteously complained: 'It is very hard that they cannot find in all the world some other battle-field than just my dominions.'

Moved to compassion by these frequent complaints, Major Abbott volunteered to proceed to Russia, and 'to become in fact, though not in name, the ambassador of a Khan of Tatary to the court of the Muscovite.' After some hesitation his offer was accepted, and it was at length decided that he should traverse the desert to Mangishlak, a distance of 480 miles, and there take boat for a Russian fort built of stone, three marches to the north of that peninsula.

It was the first week in March before he actually started, being entrusted with a jewelled dagger, an Ispahan sabre, and a letter for the Czar enclosed in a bag of sarsenet flowered with gold. The guide selected by the Khan was the chief of the Chawdor Toorkomans, a tall, powerful, noble-looking barbarian, but with a deep-set eye that 'was the very channel-light of avarice and treachery.' The first day's march lay through a well-wooded and highly cultivated country, interspersed with large villages and spacious residences. The road was well defined, and exhibited considerable movement. Strings of camels going forth or returning, one-horse carts in which rode an Oozbeg matron driven by a slave, with whom his mistress was frequently on improper terms of intimacy, and Toorkoman horsemen, singly or in groups, imparted spirit and animation to the scene.

On the next day the aspect of the land was still unchanged, the natural aridity of the soil being overcome by artificial irrigation. The ruins, too, were passed of the old Kalmuk capital Unbarra, long since abandoned on the discovery of huge bones, supposed to have belonged to the ancient Anakim. A three

days' halt, in spite of Major Abbott's remonstrances, took place at Darh Houz, a small town defended by a rectangular mud fort, surrounded by a double wall with curtains and circular bastions. An equal delay occurred after another day's advance, and on the 14th March the travellers entered the region of tents and nomad life.

There must surely be some strange attraction in the wild freedom of the desert, to atone for the filthy uncleanliness, physical and moral, of the wandering tribes. M. Vambery revels in the dirty rags of the Dervish, Major Abbott is at home in the foul atmosphere of a Toorkoman tent, and even the gentle, refined Arthur Conolly quits with regret the society of those unwashed savages.

Kids and lambs, men and women—very slightly clad—sleep together in the same black felt tent, in close proximity. The women, we are told, have complexions of a transparent, sunny hue, such as is seen on a ripe nectarine or an evening cloud. Their eyes are bright and sparkling, but ill-cut and only half-opened, and the hair is plaited in two long tresses that are simply loathsome. Their dress consists of a chogah or cloak of striped, sometimes quilted, chintz or silk, over a pair of very loose drawers. 'They seem clad,' writes the enraptured envoy, 'in the wings of butterflies, and the dress appears to confer on them a fay-like kindred with the wild creatures proper to the desert.' The disenchantment, however, must have been very complete when they were seen helping themselves to mutton broth, in which lumps of fat were floating and bobbing about. Men and women, though squatted round different bowls, alike tear off a piece of bread, which they knead in the broth with their dirty hands. Then, scooping up as much as they can at a time, they cram it into their mouths, while they bend over the vessel that the drops may be caught and do duty a second time.

On the 1st of April the British envoy reached the desert of the Kuzzaks, a beardless race, living almost wholly on the milk of sheep, mares, and camels, with occasionally a little camel's flesh salted and boiled. Their dislike of 'villanous saltpetre' is not inferior to the aversion avowed by Sir John Falstaff, and of artillery they entertain a superstitious dread. Men and women dress alike. Ignorant, or careless, of the use of linen, they content themselves with a mantle of the half-tanned skin of a sheep or young camel, with the wool turned inside, and sometimes of the skin of a horse, with the hair outside. The women are said to be too red and too robust, and, 'perhaps,' the ugliest in the world.

In ten days more the Caspian was sighted, but not a single sail broke the monotony of the blue expanse, for quite recently the Toorkomans had set fire to every Russian vessel upon which they could lay their hands. Rejecting the proposition of his treacherous guide that he should purchase a boat and a couple of Russian slaves, and make for an island about five hours' sail from the shore, where he would be certain to find shipping, Major Abbott resolved to push on to the Russian outpost, about three marches distant. The headman of a small Kuzzak tribe, in league with the Chawdor Chieftain, undertook to conduct him, but in the darkness of the second evening the envoy was suddenly assaulted, badly wounded, and beaten almost to death. His servants also were maltreated, and his property divided among his brutal assailants. His life, however, was saved by the interposition of the Kuzzak's brother, but for many days he was dragged from one encampment to another, until he was released through the marvellous fidelity of a messenger despatched by Major Todd from Herat, who had started from Khiva, without stopping to refresh himself after his forty days' journey, and, as if dropped from heaven, arrived at a moment when Major Abbott's life hung by a thread.

The envoy was then safely guided to Fort Nuov Alexandrofski, into which he was admitted after some comical precautions on the part of the commandant, and ultimately forwarded to Orenberg, whence the gallant, if unfortunate, General Perofski sent him on to St Petersburg. Though robbed, bruised, and crippled for life in his right hand, Major Abbott did not the less exert himself to accomplish the object of his humane and hazardous mission. In the following year his preliminary labours enabled his successor, Captain, afterwards Sir Richmond, Shakespear, to proceed to St Petersburg in charge of 400 Russian slaves, who were exchanged for an equal number of imprisoned Oozbegs and Toorkomans.

CHAPTER X.

KHIVA.

KHIVA: HISTORICAL NOTICE—NATURAL PRODUCTIONS—THE SAXAUL—POPULATION—THE CAPITAL CITY—THE KHAN AND HIS WIVES—EXECUTIONS—PERSIAN CAPTIVES—CARAVAN ROUTES—URGHUNJ, OLD AND NEW—HAZARASP—KUNGRAD—CAPTAIN CONOLLY'S JOURNEY FROM ASTRABAD TO HERAT—MANNERS AND CUSTOMS OF THE TOORKOMANS—MERV.

THE extensive and fertile oasis in the midst of the sandy deserts of Central Asia, known in these days as the Khanat of Khiva, was called by the Greeks Chorasmia, and by the Arabs Khwarezm. The Chorasmians were of the Aryan race, and their contingent to the army of Xerxes was equipped precisely in the Bactrian fashion. It is probable that Chorasmia formed a portion of the short-lived Greco-Bactrian monarchy, and it certainly passed under the domination of the White Huns, from whom it was subsequently wrested by the Toorks. In the legendary history of Persia, all the country enclosed between the Oxus and Jaxartes, between the Caspian Sea and China, is designated Tooran, from Toor the son of Feridoon, a prince of the Paishdadian dynasty, whose founder Kaiomurs, a grandson of Noah, selected Balkh as the seat of his government.

The most celebrated monarch of this line was Afrasiab, the son of Pushung, who conquered Persia and reigned over it for twelve years. Then arose the great Persian patriot and hero, Roostam, who encountered Afrasiab in battle and, dragging him out of his saddle, would have slain or captured him, had not the king's girdle broke at the critical moment. Falling to

the ground, he was rescued by a desperate charge of his troops. The independence of Persia, however, was achieved, and the river Oxus was mutually accepted as the boundary line between the two States.

Peace did not long subsist on those terms. More than once afterwards Afrasiab invaded Persia, but was at length completely worsted by Roostam, and compelled even to cede Bokhara and Samarkand, with other important districts. In the end he was put to death by Khai Khosroo, the third sovereign of the Khaianian dynasty, who slew Afrasiab's son, Sheidah, in single combat, and stigmatized the prostrate province with the name of Khowarezm, or Easy Victory.

Surer footing is found when we come to the conquest of Khorassan and Mawaralnahr, and their conversion to the faith of Islam. During the ninth century Khwarezm was an appanage of the Samanides, upon whose extinction it fell into the hands of Mahmoud of Ghuznee, the first Mohammedan invader of Hindostan, and destroyer of the Temple of Somnauth. Its next rulers were the Seljooks, the last of whom, Toghrul II., fell in battle against Sooltan Allah-ood-deen Takkesh, Khan of Khwarezm. The first independent ruler of this oasis was Kootb-ood-deen Mohammed, ewer-bearer to Sanjar the Seljookian, upon whom it was conferred by that unfortunate monarch at the close of the eleventh century. The last of this family was the gallant Jelal-ood-deen, 'whose active valour repeatedly checked the Moguls in the career of victory,' and who, 'could the Carizmian empire have been saved by a single hero,' would, in the opinion of Gibbon, have achieved that illustrious distinction. His father, Mohammed, provoked an unequal conflict with the Moghul hordes of Chinghiz Khan, in the early part of the thirteenth century, and after the loss of his dominions 'expired, unpitied and alone, in a desert island of the Caspian Sea.'

For the next 120 years Khwarezm was governed by the

descendants of Chinghiz Khan, who gave place to a succession of petty Oozbeg princes, until the power of Timour Lung extended, at the opening of the fifteenth century, 'from the Irtish and Volga to the Persian Gulf, and from the Ganges to Damascus and the Archipelago.' From one of Timour's feeble successors it was torn in 1498 by Shah Bukht Sooltan, who, in his turn, was vanquished and slain at Merv twelve years later by Shah Ismail, the founder of the Souffavean dynasty and the implacable enemy of the Oozbegs. Very shortly afterwards, however, the Oozbegs of Khwarezm again asserted their independence of Persia, and maintained a separate misrule until they passed beneath the shadow of Nadir Shah. Their Khan, Sooltan Ilboorz, then suffered 'the death of a dog,' by having his throat cut, and a kinsman of the Khan of Bokhara was placed upon the throne he had dishonoured and forfeited.

Under the famous Beggie Jan, the Khan of Khiva was reduced to a state of vassalage to Bokhara, but since the death of that half-crazy monarch, in 1802, the mutual relations of the two States have been those of independent kingdoms divided by jealousy, while their common safety depended upon close union and concerted action. The Muscovite consequently sits in the seat of his ancient master, the Tatar, and the Cossack domineers where the Kuzzak was despised.

Khiva is bounded on the west by a desert which stretches for 800 miles in a north-easterly direction, from the south-east angle of the Caspian to the base of the Moughojar range, and for an equal distance from that sea in a south-easterly direction to Balkh. 'This vast tract,' Canon Rawlinson remarks, 'void of all animal life, without verdure or vegetation, depressed in parts (according to some accounts) below the level of the ocean—the desiccated bed, as Humboldt thinks, of a sea which once flowed between Europe and Asia, joining the Arctic Ocean with the Euxine—separates more effectually than a water

barrier between the Russian steppes and the country of Khorassan, and lies like a broad dry moat outside the rampart of the Elburz range. It is sandy and salt; and is scarcely inhabited, excepting towards the skirts of the hills that fringe it, and along the courses of the rivers that descend from those hills and struggle—vainly, except in one or two instances—to force their way to the Sea of Aral, or the Caspian.' On the east of Khiva lies the Khanat of Bokhara, and immediately to the north is the blue expanse of the Aral, or Sea of Khwarezm.

The country enclosed within these wide limits is highly cultivated, being watered not only by the Amou, but also by an elaborate system of canals, sluices, and reservoirs. Wheat is sown early and harvested in June, not unfrequently yielding sixty-fold. On the moist lands rice is grown very successfully, being planted in April, and gathered in September. A coarse kind of sorgum, or jowarree, supersedes oats and yields three hundred-fold, while the stalks are greedily eaten by the cattle. Barley, millet, lentils, peas, &c., thrive well, as also cotton in the southern districts, and in the northern hemp, tobacco, sesame, and excellent madder. To make up for the absence of meadow hay, lucerne is largely cultivated, and may be cut three times in the year. The fruits of Khiva have been celebrated from time immemorial, and consist of apples, pears, quinces, plums, figs, peaches, apricots, and grapes, while the melons are peculiarly delicious. Timber, however, is scarce, although there is no lack of tall poplars, mulberry trees, and elms.

On the steppes vegetation is confined to a species of wormwood, the thorny shrub devoured by camels, and a kind of willow, called Saxaul, which is the only substitute for firewood. This plant, the *Anabasis Ammodendron* of botanists, has been described as 'sometimes growing to a height of 15 feet, and forming whole woods on rivers and lakes. It is probably the most lugubrious-looking tree in the world. It has no leaves,

but only small excrescences of a livid hue; it has no ramifying branches, but only thin boughs coming immediately from the stems; last, not least, it does not grow erect, but laboriously struggles up in zig-zag curves, as though it longed to return to the earth, whence it sprang up with such painful effort. Still the tree makes excellent fuel, and is an inestimable blessing in a country in which there is no other material to kindle a fire. Until lately, the Russians heated their steamers on the Aral and Sir Daria exclusively with Saxaul.'

According to Dr Wolff, the Jews of Toorkestan will have it that the Khivans are descended from the Hivites, who were driven out of Palestine by Joshua, though it appears only that they were made 'hewers of wood and drawers of water unto all the congregation.' Be that as it may—and it would be scarcely less absurd to discover a Hivite extraction for the Auvergnats in Paris—the fixed population is at present divided into Oozbegs, Tajeeks or Sarts, and Persians. The first of these are the governing class, and came originally from the north about the end of the fifteenth century, under the pressure of the Russian advance. The Tajeeks, or Sarts, are of the Indo-Persian stock, and have clung to the land while each new wave of conquest has rolled over their bowed heads. They constitute by far the most useful and productive class of the community. Intellectually, they are incomparably superior to their rulers, and are not only occupied with agricultural and commercial pursuits, but have for some time past taken an active part in the management of public affairs. As for the Persians, they are either slaves, or freedmen the descendants of slaves, and are employed to till the soil and to discharge menial functions in the households of the rich and powerful.

The nomad tribes are at least as numerous as the fixed population, though their actual numbers can only be matter of conjecture from very imperfect data. The Kara-Kalpaks, or

Black Hats, roam about the delta of the Amou, and employ much of their time in fishing. They are said to possess 150 boats between Kungrad and the Aral, varying in burden from 300 lbs. to 2000 lbs. They are an industrious and unwarlike tribe, and have nearly lost their wandering propensities. The Kirghiz, on the other hand, being great breeders of cattle, are always in movement, pitching their tents wherever grass is obtainable for their flocks and herds, and passing on from one grazing ground to another. Their chief haunts lie between the Amou and the Yany Su, though not strictly confined within those limits. The Toorkomans occupy the southern and western borders, and are the most important of all the wandering tribes. Towards the eastern coast of the Caspian, the Kuzzaks are chiefly found, and enjoy the unenviable distinction of producing 'perhaps the ugliest women in the world.'

The fauna of the Khivan Khanat has already been enumerated. No mention, however, was made of the nightingale, which, as we learn from M. Vambery, trills his thick-warbled notes the summer long, while at Bokhara there are only storks, so that the jeering Khivan thus twits the less favoured Bokhariot: 'Thy nightingale song,' he cries, 'is the bill-clapping of the stork.'

The city of Khiva is pleasantly situated in the midst of green fields, orchards, and lofty poplars. It encloses two watercourses, and is surrounded by a clay-built wall five miles in circumference and ten feet in height. Within this there is a second wall, between two and three miles in circuit, and twenty-eight feet in height, with a width of twenty-two feet in the lower part. The space between these walls is laid out to some extent in gardens. On the inner wall were mounted twenty guns to protect the Ark or Royal Castle, which comprises not only the palace, but also the residences of the chief official persons and several *medresschs*, or Mussulmaun seminaries. The

streets are narrow and tortuous, but the bazaar boasts of a vaulted roof. The entrance into the Ark is by a narrow gate which opens into a courtyard filled with servants and soldiers of the body-guard. Two cannons were planted here by Nadir Shah, highly ornamented, which he probably brought from Delhi.

An inner gate leads into another and more spacious court, on one side of which stands a mean-looking building that serves for Government Offices, and where all the business of the state is conducted under the supervision of the Mehtur or Prime Minister. To the left of this is a guard-house occupied by soldiers, police, and executioners, functionaries whose office was no sinecure under Oozbeg rule, notwithstanding M. Vambery's assertion that 'the Khivan Oozbeg, although but rough-hewn, is the finest character of Central Asia.'

Between these two buildings a small gate closes the passage to the royal residence, a poor mud hut, without windows. The furniture consists of a few costly carpets, some sofas and round cushions, and several chests. It is divided into the Harem, or suite of women's apartments, and the Hall of Audience.

The Khan, at the time of M. Vambery's visit, was waited upon by fifteen head servants. He wore a sheep-skin cap, clumsy boots stuffed with yards of linen rag, and a thickly wadded coat of silk or chintz, the ordinary costume of the Oozbegs. He would rise before the dawn and attend the morning prayer for half-an-hour. He then partook of tea, seasoned with mutton fat and salt. At times learned mollahs were invited to discuss knotty theological problems, an exercitation that usually lulled the Khan to sleep for a couple of hours or more. To this succeeded the business of the state, which was followed by a heavy breakfast, all who were present standing the while in a respectful attitude. Chess filled up the interval till the mid-day prayer, an affair that occupied an hour.

Then came the Public Audience. Seated on a terrace over the outer court, the Khan was compelled to listen with as much patience as he could command to every one, no matter how humble, who chose to address him, and not unfrequently he had to endure home-truths of a very personal and unpleasant character. The afternoon prayer cut short this disagreeable duty, after which the Khan went forth for a ride outside the walls, until sunset. Evening prayer was offered in full assembly.

The labours of the day were then crowned with a luxurious supper, washed down by spirituous drinks, and enlivened by the performances of jugglers, singers, and musicians, the latter making use of a tambourine and an instrument somewhat resembling a violin, but with a longer neck, and with three strings, one of wire and two of silk: it was played with a bow. The songs were mostly of an erotic character. Two hours after sunset the Khan retired into the harem, where he had only two wives, but both of the Blood Royal, whose constant occupation was the making of the articles of apparel worn by their lord.

At a stated hour the ladies were taken out for a drive in a large gaudy carriage, shut in with red shawls and carpets, and preceded and followed by two horsemen bearing white staves. As the carriage passed along every one rose and made a low bow. In winter time the Khan lived in a light tent pitched outside the walls, with a fire burning in the middle; but in the summer season he frequently repaired to Rafenek or Tashhauz, castles built in the Persian style, and possessing some window-panes and even looking-glasses, with fine gardens around.

The executioners had, indeed, quite enough to do. M. Vambery describes a horrible spectacle witnessed by himself. While he was staying in Khiva, disguised as a dervish, three hundred prisoners of the Chawdor tribe of Toorkomans were brought into the town, and for forty-eight hours kept without food. They were chained together in groups of ten or a dozen,

with iron collars round their necks, and those under forty years of age were sold as slaves, or bestowed as useful presents upon nobles whom the Khan delighted to honour. The leaders were conducted to the gallows or the block, but eight old men, who were too feeble to be utilized in any way, were laid on their backs upon the ground. 'They were then bound hand and foot, and the executioner gouged out their eyes in turn, kneeling to do so on the breast of each poor wretch; and after every operation he wiped his knife, dripping with blood, upon the white beard of the hoary unfortunate. . . As each fearful act was completed, the victim, liberated from his bonds, groping around with his hands, sought to gain his feet. Some fell against each other, head against head; others sank powerless to the earth again, uttering low groans, the memory of which will make me shudder as long as I live.'

Their offence, it must be admitted, had been sufficiently heinous. They had surprised and plundered a caravan of Khivan traders, whom they then left in the desert without food or clothing, so that fifty-two out of sixty perished of cold and hunger. Executions, however, were of daily occurrence, and very frequently for offences against the law or traditions of the Koran. Another common sight was that of a body of horsemen riding into the great square, and throwing down before the officer appointed for that purpose the heads of robbers, or rebels, which they carried at their saddle bows. In truth, this was an old and general practice in the East, and has prevailed among most barbarous peoples. Pietro delle Valle relates how on the 21st March, 1618, being the Nou Roz, or Persian New-Year's Day, 'among the presents brought to the palace (of Shah Abbas at Ferhabad) was one on the part of the Khan of Chorasan, who, among many other things, sent nearly three hundred heads of Uzbeck Tartars, besides a nobleman of distinction of that nation, and eight or ten of his servants alive, who surren-

dered themselves prisoners, the result of a skirmish, in which the remainder were put to the rout.'

M. Vambery, no friend of the Russians, candidly allows that they have contributed largely to the suppression of barbarous usages in Central Asia. By means of their naval station at Ashourada, for instance, they have put down kidnapping and piracy by the Toorkomans along the shores of the Caspian. The latter, however, had a depôt for Persian slaves at Gömush-tépé, a small town about twenty miles from the mouth of the Görghen, or Gurghan. Here those unhappy beings were fastened with heavy chains, badly fed, and clothed in rags, in order to give greater weight to their applications to their friends for ransom. At night an iron ring was put round their necks and attached to a peg, so that at every movement of their body a rattling noise was produced. After a brief delay they were sold for the Khiva or Bokhara market. Even worse than Gömushtépé was Attrek, on the river of that name—the ancient Sarneius—which is pronounced emphatically to be a place of torment for Persian captives.

From this point there are three caravan routes to Khiva. The first skirts the Caspian at the back of the Greater Balkan for two days in a northerly direction, and then for ten days runs nearly due east. This route occupies twenty-four days, and is badly supplied with water, but possesses the recommendation of being tolerably free from robbers. The second, or middle, course lies along the ancient channel of the Oxus, and passing between the Great and Little Balkan proceeds north-east, Khiva being reached in twenty days. On this line at the foot of the latter range, which rises to a height of 3000 feet, are marshes that resemble quicksands, and which have to be cautiously avoided. The third route is by far the shortest, and may be traversed in a fortnight, sweet water being obtainable at every halting-place; but, on the other hand, it is terribly infested by Toorkomans,

and can be pursued only by very numerous, or well-armed, caravans. At one point a table-land rises suddenly out of the sandy desert, and is some 300 feet above the lower level. Here antelopes and wild asses are seen grazing in large herds, and M. Vambery conjectures that this plateau, which he calls Kaflankir, or Tiger-field, may formerly have been an island begirt by the Oxus. At another point the track skirts the Shor Gol, a rectangular lake of salt water, about twelve miles in circumference.

Until quite a recent period the commercial capital of the Khanat was Köhne or Kunya Urghunj, called, also, Jorjaniah. It stood on both banks of the Amou, with a bridge connecting the two divisions. The place was utterly destroyed by Chinghiz's son Okkadai, in 1221, but subsequently recovered much of its importance, until the river changed its course and left the town, as it were, stranded in the interior. According to Pascal of Vittoria, the tomb of Job was to be seen here in 1338, but Colonel Yule sceptically remarks that, if tombs are to be taken as evidence, 'the man of Uz' was buried in Oudh.

New or Yani Urghunj is considerably higher up the river, from which it is about eight miles distant. It is surrounded by a wall, and stands in the midst of productive gardens, with a population estimated at 3000 souls. Between thirty and forty miles to the south-east of Khiva is the fortified town of Hazarasp, boasting of a manufactory of gunpowder. It is supposed to contain 4000 inhabitants.

Kungrad, on the Taldyk branch of the Amou, has fallen from its once high estate. Though nominally fortified, it is utterly defenceless, and its mud hovels are in such a ruinous condition that its mixed population of Oozbegs, Sarts, Karakalpaks, and Kirghize, prefer to dwell in tents. There are, indeed, a few public buildings that seem to bear witness to better times in the past, but Admiral Boutakof describes the streets as nar-

row, crooked, dirty, and malodorous, though he admired the well-cultivated fields, gardens, and melon-grounds outside the apology for a wall. In shape it is an oblong square, and the population is variously put at from six to eight thousand. The Kirghiz come hither to exchange their cattle for cereals and pulse, but the country around has been cruelly devastated by the Toorkomans, who have been in the habit of carrying off the adults, and selling them as slaves to the Khivans and Persians, being wholly unrestrained either by the precepts of the Koran or by feelings of patriotism.

Kungrad was for a time the chief seat of a petty Oozbeg principality, but was reduced to obedience in 1814 by Mohammed Raheem Khan. If it be identical with Major Abbot's 'Gonghraut,' it was at one time memorable for a custom more honoured in the breach than in the observance. Every stranger, he says, was challenged to a wrestling match by an unmarried damsel, and the conquered was subjected to the caprice of the victor or victrix. The Russian mission to the late Khan Said Mohammed, found the neighbourhood very unhealthy, and complained bitterly of the mosquitoes and gadflies. The other towns of the Khanat are even less important than those above-mentioned. Khoja-ili, Bent, Tashhauz, Khanki, and Mangyt, are all insignificant places, defenceless save against the marauding Toorkomans, and inhabited by a wretched and impoverished population.

In the spring of 1830, Captain Arthur Conolly, an amiable and intelligent officer of the Bengal Artillery, endeavoured to make his way overland to India through Russia, Persia, and Central Asia. In this he was only partially successful, being thwarted in his desire to traverse the Khanats of Khiva and Bokhara. For the purposes of this compilation it is sufficient to mark his course from Astrabad, a few miles from which town he made his first acquaintance with the Toorkomans, nominally

tributaries of the Shah, but who nevertheless kidnapped his subjects.

'Four miles of our road from Astrabad,' he wrote, 'were through an open wood, in which there was a vast lake, and our path lay for the most part over the heads of many strong dams raised to divide the water, so that portions of it might be drawn off at pleasure for rice grounds. Then we rode for six miles across a very rich meadow to the river Goorgaun. The grass in some places grew so luxuriantly that, at a distance, we mistook it for grain. The Toorkoman tents, in camps of from sixty to eighty families, were thickly dotted over it; troops of mares and foals, herds of oxen and camels, and numerous flocks of sheep and goats, were ranging in all directions to choose their pasture, watched here and there by a dog or a ragged Tatar child.'

The Gurghan was here sixty yards wide, with a deep bed which is filled to overflowing when the melted snows descend from the Elburz mountains. In summer-time it is shallow, but the water is always sweet and drinkable after it has stood a little while and had time to settle, though M. Vambery avers that it has a fishy flavour as high as Gömushtépé, owing to the dense shoals of fish. For three miles on either side the land is wonderfully productive, and is said to yield from seventy to a hundred-fold.

Quitting the meadow land on the 26th April, Captain Conolly came upon a light dry soil, covered with patches of good grass, small thorns, and straggling bushes. On the next day he crossed the Attreck by a ford, twenty-seven miles from the Gurghan, where it was forty yards wide. In spring this river overflows its banks, and its waters are muddy and discoloured.

Marching due north all night across a barren country, he passed the ruins of Meshed-i-Misreaun, and struggled on over

ridges and hillocks of sand, with the thermometer in the tent at 97° during the heat of the day, and not a breath of wind stirring. During the 30th the caravan proceeded up the old bed of the Oxus, 2000 paces wide, and pushed on all night through drenching rain till they reached a spring of delicious water on a plateau covered with fine grass. The Balkan range was about thirty miles to the north, abounding in springs and 'with verdure clad,' running from E.N.E. to W.S.W.

May-day was spent in traversing 'a barren white plain, on which there was not a blade of herbage—not a weed. In parts it was strongly impregnated with salt, and portions of soil on which the mineral lay in a thin crust, when refracted in the extreme distance, had the appearance of white buildings. The hard earth sounded under the horses' feet, but some tracks of deep camel footmarks that crossed the plain, showed that, earlier in the season, it had been watered. These, and the bones of a camel which lay bleaching in the sun, were the only signs we had of any other living thing having passed over so waste a place. Before us was apparently a forest, but when we neared it every evening we found only large bushes growing in deep sand, with here and there a small tree; so much did the mirage deceive us, accustomed as we had become to its illusion. A cuckoo was singing on the decayed branch of a small tree; we saw some beautifully-coloured paroquets (the body green, head and wings of a rich brown colour), and a flight of birds like the Indian minas (a species of starling); and, desolate as the scene was, there was a beauty about it in the stillness of the broad twilight. Occasionally, during our journey from the Goorgaun, we had started a hare from her form; many antelopes bounded across the plain; and the desert rat (an animal rather slighter than the common rat, with a tuft on the tip of its tail, and which springs with four feet like a kangaroo) was everywhere common.'

Captain Conolly himself went no further than a large pool of water called Cheen Mohammed, about 210 miles from Astrabad. He was here forced to retrace his steps, and more than once was in danger of his life. However, he at length reached Astrabad in safety, and on the 12th June started afresh for Meshed, travelling along the foot of the Elburz range, by Shahrood, Abbasabad, Subzawar, and Nishapoor, to Meshed, whence he pursued his route to Herat, 'the gate of India,' and traversing the kingdom of Kabul, stood once more on British soil. The conclusion he arrived at from what he had seen and heard during his long and eventful journey was to the effect that if ever the Russians became masters of Khiva, they would move on by the Amou to Balkh, and create a revolution in the trade of Central Asia. Should they ever attempt the perilous enterprise of invading India, they will, as it seemed to Captain Conolly, make Khiva their base of operations, whence they will ascend the Amou to Balkh, cross the intervening mountains by the Bamian Pass, and push on to the Indus by Kabul and Peshawur —not then a British military station. There is also another and easier route through Korassan.

The line of march from Khiva to the Indian frontiers did not appear to this observant officer as likely to be impeded by any very extraordinary difficulties, the Amou being navigable for eight months of the year. At the same time the passage of the Hindoo Koosh would be attended with considerable labour, 'for provisions must be carried all the way (from Balkh to Kabul), and there would be difficulty in transporting artillery and stores over these stupendous mountains. However, the passes are practicable during six months of the year.' From Kabul a mountainous but very passable road, well supplied with water, leads to Attock, by way of Jellalabad and Peshawur, but it is Kandahar that, in Captain Conolly's opinion, will prove the pivot upon which the real operations of war will turn.

That could only be so, however, in the event of Afghanistan being previously reduced to the condition of a Russian or a British dependency.

During his brief experience of the desert, Captain Conolly availed himself to the utmost of the opportunities he enjoyed of studying the habits and customs of the Toorkomans. His description of a modern tent is equally applicable to those which astonished William de Ruysbroek and other travelled friars of the middle ages. Four pieces of framework, made of light sticks loosely pivoted on each other so that they may be drawn out or put together at pleasure (after the manner of lazy tongs or scissors), are set up in a circle of twelve feet diameter, space being left for the lintels of a wooden door. To the top of this frame are tied the ends of many long pliant sticks, which bend up in the shape of a dome, and are fixed in a circular hoop of wood, which forms the top, and the chimney of the tent. Over this skeleton-work are laid large cloths of thick black felt; they are raised on forked sticks tied round the dome and kept close by a broad band which goes round the centre of the whole. Not a pin or a pole is required for these tents; they are roomy and a defence against all weathers, and one is no more than a load for a camel.'

The amount and variety of disease, however, in an *oubeh*, or camp, painfully surprised the traveller. Ophthalmia was almost universal, while cutaneous diseases, leprosy, elephantiasis, rheumatism, and insanity, were all represented in this small tented village.

'It is a wild scene, a Toorkoman camp. All its tenants are astir at daybreak, and the women, after a short busy period, retire to work within their tents. Towards the evening the men get together, and sit in circles, discoursing; the mistress of a tent is seen seated outside, knitting; near her is an old negro woman, dry and withered as the deserts of Libya, who is

churning in a skin hung upon three sticks, or dandling the last born; and the young fry, dirty and naked, except perhaps a small jacket or skull cap, fantastically covered with coins, bits of metal, or beads and charms, run about in glee, like so many imps, screaming and flinging dust on each other, the great game of these unsophisticated children of nature. As the day declines, the camels are driven in, and folded within the camp; soon after the sun has set a few watchers are set; here and there perhaps in a tent remain for a short time the light of a candle and the sound of the millstones, but soon the whole camp is in still repose.'

The Toorkomans roam over the wilderness stretching from the south-east of the Caspian Sea to the vicinity of Balkh, and from the foot of the Elburz mountains to the banks of the Amou. They speak of themselves as the Nine Peoples, or Tribes, resembling each other in all essential points. The Chawdors, numbering 12,000 tents, occupy the Ust Urt plateau between the Caspian and the Aral. The 50,000 tents of the Ersari, tributaries of Bokhara, are pitched along the left bank of the Amou. Near Andkui are met the Alielies, a small tribe possessing only 3000 tents, while the yet smaller division, named Kara, are content with half that number. It is well that these are so few, for they infest the region between Andkui and Merv, and are badly pre-eminent in fierceness and brutality. Near the last-named town the historic Salores, brave and far-descended, fill some 8000 tents, and next to them on the Murghab come the equally warlike families of the Sarukhs, with their 10,000 tents.

From Merv well nigh to Khiva the Tekkeh Toorkomans wander over the Kara-Koum or Black Sands, the most powerful of all the tribes and the scourge of Khorassan. Their numbers are estimated by M. Vambery at 60,000 tents, but General Ferrier, a more trustworthy guide in this particular matter, is

content with 35,000. Nominally, they are subject to the Khan of Khiva, but plunder Khivan and Persian with perfect impartiality. To check their inroads Shah Abbas established on the frontier beyond Meshed a colony of Koords, but he thereby only increased the evil he had hoped to mitigate. For these mountaineers, though Sheeahs, speedily made common cause with the Toorkoman Soonees, and readily connived at their inroads into Persian territory and seizure of their co-religionists. In 1832, however, they were severely chastised by Abbas Meerza and temporarily reduced to a state of order.

The 10,000 tents of the Goklans give life and movement to the upper valleys of the Attreck and Gurghan. These are the most civilized of all the Toorkomans and are comparatively settled, cultivating the land and acknowledging themselves subjects of the Shah. Near the mouth of those two rivers and right across the desert to the confines of the oasis, the fierce Yamoods prey upon all alike, and in these latter days are believed to have imposed their will upon the Khan of Khiva. They number, according to M. Vambery, 40,000 tents, which General Ferrier cuts down to 25,000. The entire Toorkoman population may be safely taken at about three-quarters of a million.

'How can any spark (of civilization),' exclaims that adventurous orientalist, 'penetrate to Central Asia, as long as the Toorkomans menace every traveller, and every caravan, with a thousand perils!' General Ferrier, however, was of opinion that their incursions into Khorassan might easily be checked by occupying the three principal passes which lead into the steppe, and by stationing three or four columns of light cavalry on the frontier, supported by a few howitzers and field-pieces. 'Unhappily,' he adds, 'there is little hope that such a plan would be adopted by the Government of the Shah; provided gold flows into his treasury, little does he care whether his

people are pillaged or not, or that eight or ten of his principal nobles eat up the revenues of the country.' This was written prior to the Shah's romantic visit to Europe.

If caring little for Fraternity, the Toorkomans practise Liberty and Equality in the most uncompromising manner. Their Aksakuls—literally Grey Beards—exercise no more than a moral influence, each in his own *aoul*, or group of families. When a Chief meditates a foray—called by them a *chappow*, or *chap-aoul*—he plants his lance, surmounted by his colours, in front of his tent, and a crier goes about through the encampment inviting all good Moslemin to join in a raid against the Persian infidels. The volunteers plant their spears beside that of the Chief. When a sufficient number have presented themselves, the departure is appointed for that day month, in order to give time to get the horses into condition. Each animal is thenceforth allowed 6 lbs. of hay and 3 lbs. of barley *per diem*, which reduces his flesh and improves his pace. For half-an-hour every day he is ridden at full speed, after which some time elapses before he is fed—very little water being given to him during the whole period of his training. Each Toorkoman takes the field with two animals, one his charger, the other a *yaboo* or packhorse. On setting out, it is the latter which has to bear his master, while the nobler beast follows like a dog.

The first day's march is usually a very short one, but the length increases daily. On the fourth day the charger is supplie dwith a mixture composed of 4¼ lbs. barley flour, 2 lbs. maize flour, and 2 lbs. raw sheep's-tail fat, well mixed and kneaded together. This compound is given in balls, and is much relished, while its nutritive qualities are shown in this, that after four days of such diet a horse is capable of enduring almost any amount of fatigue. Hay and straw are absolutely forbidden. The saddle is now transferred to the charger. A secure retreat

is next sought out, in which the band rests, and secretes itself, while scouts are sent out to look for a kafila. Sometimes the robber spy will join an unsuspecting party of travellers, and obtain from their own lips all the information he requires. Persian villagers too are often in league with the marauders and furnish them with the desired intelligence, in the hope of themselves being exempted from bonds and spoliation. Small detachments, besides, scour the fields and carry off the trembling peasants.

When an attack is resolved upon, half-a-dozen of the band remain with the *yaboos*, while the others fall like a whirlwind upon village or caravan, and gallop off with everything upon which they can lay their hands. Not unfrequently they will fire the houses, and never draw bit until many a mile separates them from the scene of their depredations. Of the prisoners some are taken up on the saddle, others are placed on the captured horses, and others again are fastened by a long cord to the saddle-bow of their captors, and pricked by lances if they lag behind. When incapable of further exertion, they are killed upon the spot, or left to perish miserably in the desert. Two-thirds of the prisoners often die by the way.

Now and again it happens that the villagers, apprized of the approach of their relentless enemies, suddenly attack them while passing through a defile, and give no quarter. At times the Toorkomans penetrate to a considerable distance within the Persian frontiers, gliding by night between villages, and carefully avoiding a conflict. 'The Turcomans,' according to General Ferrier, 'are the best mounted robbers in the world, but will never make good soldiers.' Should they chance to return to their tents empty-handed, they are jeered at by the women, who offer them petticoats, and otherwise insult their misfortune. The plunder is sold to the Oozbegs; a boy of ten years of age being valued at forty tomauns, or about £20;

while a man of thirty is worth only twenty-five, and of forty only twenty tomauns.

Slightly different is the account given by Captain Conolly. 'The Toorkomans,' he says, 'train their horses for a long march, and when they are going beyond the plain country, they shoe them, which they do not at other times. Their longest expeditions are undertaken in spring and autumn. With a bag of flour and some oil cakes, a few *kooroot* balls, and a waterskin for their own use, and a small bag of barley, or *jowarree*, for their horses, they set out on a distant foray. Their pace is alternately a *yoortmah*, or gentle jog trot, and a long walk; every hour or two they halt, and let their horses graze if there be herbage—themselves perhaps snatching a few moments' sleep, and occasionally they give them a handful of corn. Marching on thus unceasingly to the point they have in view, they get over much ground in a few days, and their horses', and indeed their own, steady endurance of fatigue is wonderful.' Sometimes a piece of fat is rolled round the bit, to keep the mouth moist.

General Ferrier enters at some length upon the Toorkoman horses and their management. They are treated, he tells us, more tenderly than wife or child, and are loved passionately, it being deemed a sin to maltreat one. A Toorkoman will never voluntarily fight from behind a wall or other barrier. He is only himself when in the saddle. The grass of the steppe is pronounced very sweet and nutritious, but is found only in spring. 'It produces in their horses a higher temperature and better condition of the blood, as well as a peculiar elasticity, and strength of muscle quite wonderful.' No important expeditions, according to General Ferrier, are undertaken before the end of July. After that, horses are fed on dry food, usually about 7 lbs. of barley daily, mixed with dry chopped straw, lucerne, sainfoin, or clover hay.

The best horses come of an Arab stock, and, though not handsome, are worthy of their descent. Timour it seems, distributed 4200 Arab mares among the different tribes, while Nadir Shah bestowed 600 upon the Tékés or Tekkehs. Their heads may be too long, their chests too narrow, and their legs too weedy, to please the eye of a European judge, but their pace is excellent, and their power of hunger, cold, and fatigue unsurpassed. Instances are known of Toorkoman horses covering 600 miles in six, and even in five days. General Ferrier personally vouches for 420 miles being accomplished in twelve days, of which three were passed in inaction. This animal was ridden from Teheran to Tabriz, from Tabriz to Teheran, and thence back again to the original starting-point.

A common description of horse can be had for about fourteen guineas, but a good horse of inferior breed will fetch from £40 to £48, while a second-rate animal of the best stock costs not less than £120 to £160. The best of all are not procurable for money, and can be torn from their owners only by superior force. Foals are gradually broken in to work when about two-and-a-half years old. Toorkoman horses are never placed in a stable, but always picketed in the open air, covered with warm felt rugs. In towns they are put into stables during the winter, but as soon as a little warmth returns, they are turned out into a courtyard or field, tied with head and heel ropes, and well exercised every day, except when out at grass.

Water is given to them at any time, even when in a lather of perspiration, but in that case they are galloped up and down for a while, to prevent the skin under the saddle from puffing up like a bladder. To a certain extent the Toorkomans are good horse-doctors. For incipient glanders they administer daily 6 lbs. sainfoin hay, 6 lbs. camel's milk, with 1 lb. powdered sulphur—the cure being usually wrought in about a fortnight. If a young colt refuses to feed, an incision is made, and a piece

of cartilage removed from the upper part of the nostril. The age of twenty to twenty-five years is not uncommon.

Every Toorkoman clan has its own range, beyond the limits of which it cannot wander without trespassing on the grounds claimed by some other clan. The different tribes are constantly at variance with one another, their national arms being a spear ten or twelve feet long and a sword, though most of them now possess a clumsy matchlock. They are inveterate thieves and robbers, and do not scruple to stop and plunder a guest when he has left the tent in which he has been hospitably entertained. Nor are they so facetiously polite as the Arabs, whose equivalent for 'Stand and deliver!' is, according to Captain Conolly, 'Cousin, undress thyself, thy aunt is without a garment.' The forms of hospitality, however, are as closely observed by the Toorkomans as by the wandering tribes of Syria. 'When a stranger comes to an *oubeh* (group or encampment), he is invited into the first tent, the master of which welcomes him by taking his hands within his own, and, holding the bridle of his horse, orders his wife to prepare refreshment for their guest.'

The women, indeed, do all the work of the household. They milk the camels, fetch water, make buttermilk, and collect fuel in the morning; while in the afternoon they milk the sheep and goats, make curds, prepare milk for butter and *kooroot*, and provide the evening meal. When not thus engaged, they are employed in sewing, knitting, carding wool, weaving carpets, and making felt cloths and horse clothing. They are often assisted, however, by slaves, 'who, for the most part, live very much like dogs.' When men are conversing together in a tent, it is customary for the women to pull up a small piece of cloth from their bosom and cover their mouth. Their ordinary costume consists of a long chintz chemise, open in front of the chest, which reaches to the feet and covers their loose drawers. The hair is worn in two long plaited tails, horribly greasy and

swarming with vermin, with a bunch and some sort of ornament at the end of the tail. Unmarried women part their hair in the Madonna fashion, but matrons don a heavy ugly cap, from the back of which hangs a red silk scarf, and on the front are strung any number of gold coins, according to the temporal wealth of the husband. Chastity does not appear to be one of their cardinal virtues, General Ferrier declaring that all that their husbands demand of them is obedience and hard work.

The men, he says, are rude, coarse, and of a cold, contemptuous temperament. They have large flat faces with pointed chins, and two small holes for eyes. Their heads look too small for their muscular frames, and their beards are thin, sandy, and irregular. They profess to be Soonees, which is their excuse for enslaving the heretical Sheeahs, but they know nothing of the Koran, nor heed even the ceremonies of their pretended faith. They certainly do not pray, or fast, or wash, or purify themselves, and both physically and morally are an unclean race. In every question of life they are guided by 'deb,' or precedent, of which they think far more than of the intrinsic merits of the case. It seldom happens that they have more than two wives, widows being preferred to maidens, by reason of their greater experience of household duties. A divorce is of rare occurrence. Persian female captives are not often kept as wives, being usually sold to traders from Khiva or Bokhara. 'A really old Toorkoman woman,' Captain Conolly ungallantly remarks, 'looks as if she was made of leather, and as much like a witch as any creature that can be imagined.'

The descendants of freed captives are called Kouls to the most distant generation, and are despised by the Eegs, or free-born, who never intermarry with them, and if they chance to take the life of a Koul no blood feud arises; and yet the latter are said now to constitute the majority. Children are actually married, not merely betrothed, at the precocious age of six or

seven, and live together while yet of tender years. The bride is expected to provide, besides her own clothes, the carpets and lighter articles of furniture; while the bridegroom supplies the tent, a few camels and sheep, and perhaps a mare. Should the father's circumstances be too limited to enable him to furnish his son with a separate establishment, he takes the young couple into his own tent until they are in a condition to do better for themselves.

The bridegroom's father, if a wealthy man, sometimes gets up races in honour of the event, and will offer prizes to the value of a hundred tillas, or £65 of English money. As might be anticipated, the Toorkomans are passionately fond of racing, but their matches are generally for long distances, even for twenty miles for four-year-olds, but the pace may be varied by trot, canter, and gallop. For untrained animals, the distance is often not less than eight miles. 'I once heard a young man,' says Captain Conolly, 'sing through his nose for half-an-hour, occasionally striking the two wire strings of his guitar; I could not make out any tune, but was told that he was rather an artiste, and that he had been extemporising the history of a famed horse.'

The ruling passion of the Toorkomans is covetousness. Their one thought is to increase their troops of mares and herds of camels. But let them be ever so wealthy, they continue to live on unleavened cakes of wheaten or barley meal. The dough is kneaded in a wooden trough, or on a dried skin, and baked on wood embers; at times, a little oil or *ghee*—clarified butter—is mixed with the flour. They also eat rice and *yarma*, or bruised wheat, and are fond of sour milk. On grand occasions they will kill a sheep to make broth or pillao. Camels are only slaughtered when incurably lame or likely to die—a healthy camel, capable of carrying the average burden of 570 lbs., being worth upwards of three guineas. The ordinary drink of all classes is butter-

milk, but the more opulent will, now and again, intoxicate themselves with fermented mare's milk.

In every tent may be seen one or two cast-iron pots of Russian manufacture, which are placed on tripods over the fire for the family meal. Their luxuries are spices, coarse sugar, tobacco, and gay articles of dress, chiefly from Persia, for which they exchange the produce of their flocks, and felts and carpets made by their women. The Toorkoman garb resembles that of the Oozbegs, and consists of a shirt, loose trousers, a vest, a camel's-hair cloak belted round the waist, and a large sheep-skin cap. In their tents they go barefooted, or with sandals fastened by a string round the big toe; but on horseback they sport Hessian boots, with pointed iron-tipt heels. Those who cannot afford boots, roll folds of cloth round their legs. Against these dashing, reckless barbarians, the supple, timid Persians are utterly helpless. 'A Toorkoman is a dog,' say they, 'and will only be kept quiet, like a dog, with a bit of bread: give it, then, is the doctrine of the traveller, and pass on unmolested.'

In the south-eastern extremity of the Khanat of Khiva is situated the oft-pillaged town of Merv, Maro, or Merou, which has belonged alternately to Persia, Khiva, and Bokhara. Strictly speaking, however, it now belongs to the Saryk or Sharukhs Toorkomans, and may therefore be properly noticed in this place. According to tradition, Merv was originally founded by Alexander the Great; but, falling into decay, was rebuilt by Antiochus Soter, who called it after himself Antiocheia Margiana. Both at that time and for many centuries afterwards, the country around was remarkable for its fertility, being watered by the Murghab, the Margus of Strabo and the Epardus of Arrian. At a later period, the town was honoured with the title of Merv, Shah-i-Jehan, the King of the World, and was the burial-place of Alp Arslan, the sentimental

and slightly absurd epitaph on whose tomb has already been given.

As long as it remained under the Persians the district was exceedingly flourishing. Towards the close of the last century, however, Shah Mourad of Bokhara destroyed the dams of the canals of irrigation, demolished the town, and carried off the inhabitants, estimated at 25,000 souls, to his own capital, where they were settled in a separate quarter, and are said to have taught their conquerors the manufacture of silk. On the death of Mourad the Bokharese garrison was withdrawn, and the place abandoned to the Toorkomans.

Mahommed Raheem, Khan of Khiva, subsequently took possession of Merv, and Oollah Kouli Khan also marched an army thither in fifteen days, sinking a well at every stage, but nevertheless lost 2000 camels. Though only 200 miles from both Khiva and Bokhara, neither State now appears to consider that it is worth the trouble and expense of a garrison. The Russians may possibly after a while think otherwise of a post which commands the roads to Herat and Meshed, and there is little doubt that the ancient canals might to a great extent be repaired. Sir Alexander Burnes speaks of ruins extending over a circle of thirty to forty miles in circumference, but at the time of his visit in 1832 the place was occupied by a few Oozbeg families surrounded by the tents of the Toorkomans.

In the latter part of the eighth century Merv obtained an unenviable reputation in the Moslem world as the head-quarters of a pestilent heresy. Heretical notions were, indeed, very prevalent just then. A spirit of philosophical inquiry had got abroad, and there were individuals who denied that the world had ever had a beginning, or would ever have an end. Men and beasts, they said, sprang up like the plants, and would have no existence beyond the present life. During this unwholesome state of excitement one Hasheem Ben Hakeem

declared that he himself was God. He had been, he said, in turns Adam, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, Mohammed, Abou Moslem, and now, in the fulness of time, was come to purify and rule the world. His followers were drawn chiefly from Bokhara and Samarkand, and, from the colour of their garments, were called the White-Robed, while he himself was known as Mokanna, or The Veiled. He was at last routed and driven into a strong fortress near Kesh, where he held out for several years. The place was at length reduced by famine, and it is said that the impostor threw himself into a blazing furnace, in order that it might be believed that he had returned to Heaven. This slight thread of historical fact was woven by Moore into his popular poem, 'The Veiled Prophet of Khorassan.'

CHAPTER XI.

BOKHARA.

BOKHARIA—FRONTIERS—AREA—POPULATION—THE OOZBEGS AND THEIR PECULIARITIES—THE TAJEEKS—OTHER RACES—RUSSIAN SLAVES—THE KOHIK, OR ZARAFSHAN—VALLEY OF SHUHR-I-SUBZ—NATURAL PRODUCTIONS—MANUFACTURES—TRADE—M. DE NEGRI'S MISSION—JOURNEY FROM ORENBERG TO BOKHARA—THE KHAN—SYSTEM OF ADMINISTRATION—MANNERS AND CUSTOMS—REVENUES—MILITARY FORCES.

Prior to the rapid advance of the Russians towards the south-east the Khanat of Bokhara was bounded on the north by the Sea of Aral, the Syr Darya or Jaxartes, and the mountains of Ferghana, or Khokan. On the south it extended to the 'Stony Girdle of the earth' that separates Afghanistan from Central Asia: to the eastward it was bordered by the high table-land of Pameer: while on the west it was divided from Khiva by the Desert of Khwarezm. It is justly observed, however, by M. Khanikof that the boundaries of Bokhara have never been a fixed quantity, but have expanded or contracted according to the strength or weakness of the reigning prince. 'The security of the frontiers,' he adds, 'is only relative; for it is very doubtful whether they would prove a sufficient barrier against an army organized according to European tactics, pushed on at the right season, with its movements properly regulated.'

All doubts on that point have long since been dissipated by the facility with which the Russians have pursued their career of triumph. The ancient States of Asia seem, one and all, to

dissolve at the slightest touch, just as a corpse that has been long buried is often disinterred looking as fresh and perfect as on the day when it was first hidden away out of sight, but straightway crumbles into dust if a finger be laid upon it, or even if the air move over the surface of the deceitful image.

The widest divergence marks the estimates of the area and population given by different writers. According to M. Khanikof, the superficial area of the Khanat is about 5600 geographical square miles, but Baron Meyendorf is not satisfied with less than 10,000 marine leagues, while another Russian authority reduces it to 23,000 square miles. Still greater is the difficulty of reconciling the widely-varying statements as to the exact bearings of the country. Baron Meyendorf places it between 37° and 41° North latitude, and 61° and 66° 30′ East longitude; M. Khanikof, between 37° and 43° N. and 80° and 88° E., which must surely be a misprint for 60° and 68°; while Sir Alexander Burnes asserts that it lies between 36° and 45° N., and 61° and 67° E.

On the subject of population, again, opinions are equally at variance. The last-named traveller fixes it at about one million: Dr Wolff reports 1,200,000 souls, of whom 200,000 are Persians: the authors of 'The Russians in Central Asia' exactly treble this calculation; and M. Khanikof believes that there may be in all some two and a half millions of inhabitants; but Baron Meyendorf is more precise, and gives a grand total of 2,478,000. There are, he says—his mission to Bokhara took place in 1820—1,500,000 Oozbegs, 650,000 Tajeeks, 200,000 Toorkomans, 50,000 Arabs, 40,000 Persians, 20,000 Kalmuks, 6000 Kirghiz and Karakalpaks, 4000 Jews, 4000 Afghans, 2000 Lesghians, and 2000 Gipsies—the last-named being divided into three tribes, chiefly engaged in horse-dealing.

The Oozbegs, whose name signifies one who is his own lord or master, are said to be descended from Oozbeg Khan, whose

ancestor, Sheibani Khan, was a brother of the great Batou, grandson of Chinghiz Khan, and conqueror of Russia, Poland, Silesia, and Hungary. They first obtained a footing to the south of the Syr Darya at the close of the fifteenth century, and by their encroachments on his paternal territories the gallant and genial Baber was driven from the mountains of Ferghana to found an empire and a dynasty in India. It was not, however, until the reign of Shah Mourad, commonly called Beggie Jan, that the Oozbegs came to be recognized as the dominant class in the Khanat of Bokhara.

They are described by Mountstuart Elphinstone as of short stature, with a stout, sturdy frame, a broad forehead, high cheekbones, small eyes, a thin reddish beard, black hair, and a clear, ruddy complexion. Their costume consists of a cotton shirt and trousers, a coat or tunic called *chappaou*, of silken or woollen materials, begirt round the waist with a girdle, and over that a gown of woollen cloth, felt, or posteen. In the winter season some wear a little cap of broad cloth, lined with fur, and fitting close to the head, while others prefer a pointed silk cap, called a *kalpak;* but the national head-dress is a large, white turban usually worn over a white *kalpak*. Boots are common to all classes, though the more affluent put on, for house use, a sort of slipper of light shagreen made from horse or donkey hides. Instead of stockings the legs are wound round with bandages. A knife hangs from the girdle, and also a case containing a flint and steel.

The women dress very like the men, even to the boots, except that their garments are somewhat longer. Over the head, too, they tie a silk handkerchief, and often enwrap themselves in a silk or cotton sheet. Ornaments of gold and silver are duly prized, and the hair is plaited in a long tail, after the Chinese fashion.

An Oozbeg breakfast consists of leavened bread a fortnight

old, and tea made from boiled 'lumps' or cakes of tea-leaves, softened with milk or butter, but more generally with oil from the fat tails of the Dombeh sheep: only the rich indulge in sugar. The ordinary dish for dinner is thick mutton broth, or pillao, with masses of fat conspicuous, and much relished. Horse-flesh is a delicacy reserved for the wealthy.

The favourite beverage is *kumeez*, a white-looking, sub-acid, intoxicating liquor obtained from mare's milk. It is a home-made preparation, chiefly in use during the last two months of summer, when drunkenness is consequently very prevalent. *Bozeh*, another description of fermented liquor distilled from different kinds of grain, is much taken by the poorer classes, being considerably cheaper than *kumeez*. It is of a sour taste, and in appearance somewhat resembles thin water-gruel. As a rule, however, the Oozbegs may be considered a sober and frugal race.

A few of them dwell in houses, but the vast majority cling to the tents of their forefathers. The *kibitka* is a circular tent, formed of a lattice-work of thin laths, covered with black or grey felt, and hung inside with carpets and shawls. The roof is made with four stout laths bent into a dome-shape, and held together by a wooden hoop over the middle of the tent. This simple contrivance combines the advantages of warmth and light, and is called by the Toorkomans *kara-ooee*, or Black House. An encampment of twenty to fifty *kibitkas* is known as an *Aoul*.

The Oozbegs, according to M. Khanikof, are addicted to murder and rapine, being 'more straightforward in their manners' than the Tajeeks, but they like to have on their side both darkness and superiority of numbers. As regards the ceremonies of their religion, they are extremely fanatical, for, except in the larger towns, few of them are able to read or write.

Baron Meyendorf's description of the Oozbeg costume as seen by himself in Bokhara differs in a few respects from Elphinstone's account, which probably referred more particularly to the section of that tribe dwelling to the south of the Amou. The ordinary dress of the Bokhariot, says the Russian Baron, is composed of two long robes of blue and white striped cotton, from fifteen to twenty yards in length. Many Oozbegs, however, wear a pointed cap of red cloth, trimmed with marten. The use of wide white trousers over short, tight drawers is said to be universal. Those who can afford it, indulge in robes of mingled silk and woollen texture, while the great officers of State disport themselves in rich Kashmeer shawls and gorgeous brocades. In the streets the women shroud their figures in long mantillas, or dominos, with the sleeves fastened behind, and wear a black veil to conceal their features. They are given to the use of cosmetics, and some of them are barbarous enough to suspend a ring from the nose. Their nails are tinged with henna, their eyebrows darkened and united with collyrium, and their eyelids touched with soorma from Kabul.

The Tajeeks are probably descended from the ancient Sogdians. They are certainly of the Aryan stock, and strongly resemble Europeans, but they speak the Persian language. They appear to be a tall, handsome race of men, with a fair skin, and black hair and eyes. Their moral character is that of most conquered peoples. They are said to be treacherous, false, insolent, and cowardly. 'Murder is unknown to them,' writes M. Khanikof, 'not because of its heinous nature, but because they have not sufficient courage to commit it.' They have the bad taste, too, it seems, to prefer Bokhara to St Petersburg, though Sir Alexander Burnes declares that the inhabitants of Central Asia regard the Russian capital as 'a very close approximation in wine and women to the paradise of

their blessed prophet.' Baron Meyendorf admits that they have a genius for commerce, and that they display as much intelligence and activity in mercantile operations as parsimony in their style of living. In their hands Bokhara has become essentially a trading community, and those who can traffic in nothing else offer their official influence to the highest bidder.

The Toorkomans who dwell between the capital and the banks of the Amou have settled down to peaceful pursuits, but the nomadic tribes beyond the river retain their hereditary habits and usages. It is a common Persian saying that a Toorkoman on horseback knows neither father nor mother, but will seize and sell whatever lies at his mercy. They are subject to dryness of the skin, and often lose both eye-lashes and eye-brows—vegetables being unknown to them. They suffer also from ophthalmia and rheumatism.

The Arabs, on the other hand, who are also nomads, are to be found chiefly in the northern parts of the Khanat. On account of the cold they have exchanged the tents of their Syrian ancestors for the more comfortable kibitka, and their speech would be thought a vile patois at Damascus. They are of a swarthy complexion, with large black eyes, and have the character of being simpler and less vicious than the Tajeeks. Their main occupation is the breeding of sheep.

The Persians in the Khanat are mostly captives, or the sons of captives. Many thousands of that nation were transplanted in the latter part of the last century from Merv to Bokhara and Samarkand. Their features are regular, and their hair bushy and black. They cordially detest the Oozbegs, who, nevertheless, place much confidence in them, and freely admit them into the regular military service of the State. Dr Wolff estimated the number of Persian slaves in this Khanat at 200,000, whereas Baron Meyendorf cuts down these numbers to 40,000: possibly, the latter calculation refers only to domestic

slaves, while the former embraces those engaged in agricultural labour.

In like manner, the Baron speaks of five to six hundred Russian slaves, but Dr Wolff protests that there were not more than twenty in his time, though there were many deserters. According to the Russian traveller, the price of a robust fellow-countryman ranged from £25 to £32, a skilful artisan, however, being worth double that sum, and a young woman, if good-looking, fetching as much as £100. He also further states that he saw a Russian slave who had had his ears cut off, his hands pierced with a nail, the skin stript from his back, and boiling oil poured over his arms, to make him confess in what direction his comrade had fled. They do not seem to have been generally ill-treated, being greatly valued as field-labourers and gardeners, but they complained, not unreasonably, that even after their ransom was paid, they were not permitted to leave the country. The indignant Baron accordingly suggests reprisals, and recommends that on a given day all the Bokhariots and Khivans in Russia should be arrested, and kept as hostages until every Russian captive was restored to his native land. The persistent progress of enlightenment in Russia, he complacently remarks, summons that vast empire to the realization of the generous idea of civilizing Central Asia. To Russia it belongs to impart a salutary impulse to the Khanats, and to diffuse over those countries the blessings of European civilization.

Undoubtedly it must have been a painful and depressing spectacle that met his eyes as he entered the capital in the suite of M. de Negri. 'Nous éprouvâmes,' he writes, 'un sentiment bien pénible en apercevant au milieu de cette population asiatique des soldats russes réduits à la triste condition d'esclaves. La plupart étaient sexagénaires et infirmes; à la vue de leurs compatriotes, ils ne purent retenir leurs larmes; ils bégayaient

quelques mots de leur langue maternelle ; ils s'efforcaient de se précipiter au milieu de nous ; tant le plaisir de revoir nos guerriers leur causait une vive émotion. Ces scenes touchantes, qui déchiraient l'âme, ne sauraient se depeindre.'

No Englishman, at least, will deny that Russia would have been fully justified any time within the last half century in declaring war against the two Khanats, but a very unpleasant impression would have been made upon Europe had the government of St Petersburg adopted the policy of reprisal suggested by Baron Meyendorf. It is hardly necessary even to scratch the Muscovite in order to get at the Tatar. Nothing, for instance, could be more thoroughly barbarous than General Neidhart's proclamation promising its weight in gold to any one who should bring him the head of Shamyl. The Circassian hero merely acknowledged the compliment, contemptuously remarking that he would not give a straw for the head of the Russian General.

The Kalmuks are, for the most part, descendants from the hordes of Chinghiz Khan, while the hostages brought by Timour from Afghanistan, China, and the western shores of the Caucasus will account for the sprinkling of Afghans, Chinese, and Lesghians. The Jews are supposed to have been brought from Baghdad. They live in a separate quarter by themselves, and are found in Bokhara, Samarkand, Kattakurghan, and Karshee. They may be readily distinguished by the cord tied round their waists, over which they are not suffered to wear any sort of flowing garment. Neither are they permitted to ride on horse or ass within the town walls. On the other hand, they may be beaten by a Mussulman within the town, or killed outside the walls, with perfect impunity.

Though excessively ignorant, they were much favoured by Nusser-oollah Khan, the murderer of Stoddart and Conolly. That prince was fond of asking questions about the coming of

the Messiah, and not only was present at their Feast of Tabernacles, but even partook of their food. Though his profligacy knew no restraints, he abstained from seizing upon Jewish maidens to increase and vary his harem. According to these Jews the Toorkomans belong to 'the house of Togarmah,' mentioned in Ezekiel, chap. xxvii. 14, as trading in the fairs of Tyre 'with horses, and horsemen, and mules,' and Dr Wolff asserts that they often call themselves Togranah.

The Kirghiz occupy the northern portion of the Khanat, while the Karakalpaks are met with between Jizak and Ouratoupeh. As for the Mazané, or gipsies, they are ubiquitous.

In addition to the two great rivers, the Amou Darya, and the Syr Darya—if the latter can fairly be said to have ever belonged to Bokhara—the principal stream is the Kohik, better known as the Zarafshan, or 'Gold-scattering,' in allusion to its fertilizing qualities, and not to any gold that may have been discovered in its sands. It is the Polytimetus, or 'Much-esteemed,' of classical geographers, and issues from an extensive glacier in the Kara-tagh, or Kara-tau, a name signifying the Black Mountains. The head stream is the Macha-darya, though its waters are also swollen by those of the Maghian-darya and the Fan-su. It runs from east to west until it reaches the Khanat of Bokhara, when it bends to the south-west, and finally to the south.

For the first hundred and thirty miles of its course the Kohik runs with great force and rapidity through the mountains of Khokan, carrying down much earth, which constitutes an excellent manure when deposited by floods on the adjacent fields. Even at Samarkand the current is too strong to allow ordinary boats to ply upon it, nor is it fordable except at one point, and then only in the early morning before the sun has had power to melt the snows on the mountains. Near Bokhara it is still fifty yards in width, and four feet in depth. The

Valley of Soghd, or Samarkand, owes its productiveness and beauty entirely to this river, from which at least one hundred canals convey water to the thirsty lands on either side to the distance of a mile from the banks. About twenty miles to the south-west of the capital it flows into, or forms, the Kara-kul, or Black Lake, known to the Oozbegs as the Denghiz, a word bearing the same signification as *kul*, or lake.

The only other rivers of Bokhara are the Kashka-darya and the Ak-su, both flowing through the Shuhr-i-Subz valley, and, after forming a junction, losing themselves in the sands. Several small streams, unworthy of particular notice, are likewise absorbed upon descending into the plains.

Between Bokhara and Samarkand the country is mostly flat, narrowed by the hills which hem in the valley of the Soghd, and intersected by numerous drains and channels of irrigation. This is the best cultivated district in the kingdom, and it is stated that at least seven-tenths of the entire Khanat are abandoned to nature, not so much from want of water as from the scantiness and indolence of the population. With the exception of the Noura-tagh—on which Noah's Ark is said to have rested—and Aktagh ranges, there are no hills above a thousand feet in height. The soil in the intervening plains or valleys is a hard clay covered with drifting sands to a considerable depth, and producing spontaneously only the thorny shrubs that supply the camel's repulsive fare. The low ranges of hills are of primitive formation, traversed by veins of iron ore. In the Kara-tagh to the eastward coal and copper ore have been found in considerable quantities. Spurs of this lofty range run in a southerly direction towards Termedh, and in the branch which forms the eastern boundary of the Shurh-i-Subz valley occurs the famous Kohluga Pass described by Hiouen Tsang.

Although Bokhara lies in nearly the same latitude as Naples, Madrid, and Philadelphia, the winters are far more severe there

than in any of those cities, and the cold is infinitely more intense than in London, which is situated so much farther to the north. The temperature of autumn is, on the other hand, considerably higher in Bokhara than in Europe, but lower than in the United States or at Pekin. The climate, indeed, is really hot from the middle of March to the end of November, at which season frost sets in, followed by snow to the depth of twelve to eighteen inches—ice also forming from one to four inches in thickness. But little rain ever falls, though thunderstorms are of frequent occurrence, as likewise are earthquakes. The wind blows for the greater part of the year from the north-east, and, except near the capital, the air is dry and salubrious.

The cultivated portion of the Khanat is estimated by Baron Meyendorf at 1200 square leagues, and by M. Khanikof at 600 square miles. The land is tilled for the most part by slaves, but agriculture generally is much impeded by want of water, as the canals require constant cleaning out and deepening. Rice is little grown, and that little of inferior quality. Fruits are abundant, but of watery flavour, and without aroma. Apricots, peaches, quinces, pears, apples, plums, cherries, pomegranates, almonds, and the *kishmish*, or stoneless grape, all come to maturity,

> Prunes of Bokhara, and sweet nuts
> From the far groves of Samarkand.

In the early morning, after the dew has evaporated, a cloth is spread under a plant called the *tikan*, which, being shaken, lets fall a white powder, or manna, much used in the preparation of sweetmeats.

There are no forests in the kingdom, but large quantities of wood are drifted down the Zarafshan from the mountainous region to the east of Samarkand. Wheat and barley are the chief cereals, though the poorer classes affect jowarree as more prolific. Millet is grown in small quantities, but orchards and gardens are found more profitable than agriculture. Ploughing is reserved

for night work. Gardens are generally inclosed within mud walls, silver poplars being planted all round, partly for shade, partly for fuel. The centre is occupied by a quadrangular pond, or tank, from which runnels are led in all directions to water the grounds. Four main walks, or paths, radiate from the pond. There are thirteen varieties of grape, but the wine made from them is hardly drinkable, the process being probably more in fault than the fruit. Two kinds of cotton are successfully cultivated, and almost exclusively for home consumption; from the seed an oil is extracted for cooking purposes. In some districts the tobacco-plant flourishes, while lucerne and trefoil are as common as in Khiva. Hemp is grown, but chiefly for the sake of the oil procured from the seed, the cattle being fed upon the stalks. Madder thrives, but neither indigo nor the sugarcane has yet been introduced. Wheat is said to be reaped for three years in succession from the same roots on the banks of the Oxus, the stalks being eaten down by the cattle.

Of vegetables there is a great variety, such as turnips, carrots, beetroot, onions, brinjals, radishes, greens, lentils beloved of the Tajeeks, &c., &c. The melons are pronounced delicious. The musk melon ripens in June, but July produces a melon from two to four feet in circumference, with a firm pulp two inches thick, sweet to the very rind. The water-melons are so enormous that two suffice for a donkey-load.

Beef is never eaten, but the mutton is excellent, and the tails of the sheep yield as much as 15 lbs. tallow. The Karakul district is celebrated for its jet black curly fleeces.

> And on his head he placed his sheep-skin cap,
> Black, glossy, curl'd, the fleece of Kara-kul.

The lambs are killed a few days after birth, and 200,000 skins are annually exported, especially to Persia. A shawl-wool nearly equal to that of Kashmeer is obtained from goats, by combing out the grey wool next to the skin.

The price of a good camel varies from £6 to £7. The Bokhara camels have sleek coats, and at the commencement of summer shed their hair, which is woven into a fine waterproof cloth. The two-humped Bactrian camel is much bred by the Kuzzaks in the northern parts of the Khanat. It will carry 640 lbs., while 500 lbs. are thought a good load for the ordinary camel.

There are no mules or buffaloes, but the horned cattle are tolerably good, and the ass is a large and sturdy animal. With the exception of plover and waterfowl, game is by no means plentiful. To the bees and wasps of Bokhara Sir Alexander Burnes ascribes a taste for fresh meat. Silkworms are very generally reared, the mulberry being planted everywhere in the neighbourhood of water.

Manufactures are susceptible of much improvement. No manufacturer employs more than four or five men. Silken goods are of two kinds: the one striped, after Russian patterns —the other of different shades passing into one another, red predominating; cotton, however, is usually mixed with the silk. The Toorkomans bring to market not only magnificent stallions worth from £100 to £400 each, and butter in sheep-skins, but also striped horse-cloths, woollen carpets, camel's-hair stuffs, and goat's-hair felt. The Kirghiz contribute nothing to the common stock in this manner, being simply consumers. According to Baron Meyendorf they annually barter 100,000 sheep for silk dresses, coarse cotton stuffs, cheese, barley, and pulse.

The currency of Bokhara is extremely limited. The gold *tilla* is worth thirteen shillings, the silver *tonga* seven-pence halfpenny, and the copper *poul* the thirty-eighth thousandth part of a penny.

The dyers are invariably Jews, who make large use of indigo: sandal-wood and a species of cochineal obtained in the country are also applied to silks. Tanning is still in its infancy, the leather being soft and not durable. A useful description

of shagreen for slippers and scabbards is made from sheep, goat, and ass skin.

The Bokhariots are skilful workers in steel, and turn out excellent sword blades at a very low cost. As gunsmiths, however, they are decidedly backward, and still manufacture heavy matchlocks that are fired from a rest. 'The Oozbeg,' says M. Vambery, 'will never fire his arm while in saddle. He must, before all, dismount, and, after having found a fair level ground, he betakes himself to fasten the fork-like *lafette* (gun-carriage), and then he begins to aim. When the latter object is obtained, he will have to light the occasionally wet match, no easy matter indeed, and then only you will find him meddling with the powder-pan a good while, until the explosion occurs, carrying the ball Heaven knows whither.' The guns are worthy of such marksmen.

The ladies of Bokhara find a graceful occupation in embroidering silk handkerchiefs for their lords, ornamenting them with lines from Hafiz, appropriate to the ardour of their love. The walls of rooms are sometimes painted with flowers of bright hues, in which gold leaf and lapis lazuli are freely employed. Painters are also book-binders, ornamenting the covers with wreaths and arabesques. Blue is a favourite colour of the Bokhariots, though Jonas Hanway declares that 'deep blue is their mourning colour,' and Moore describes Zelica as

> '. . . . Not glittering o'er
> With gems and wreaths, such as the others wore,
> But in that deep blue, melancholy dress,
> Bokhara's maidens wear in mindfulness
> Of friends or kindred, dead or far away.'

Since the trade of Bokhara has been monopolized by Russia it is not easy to calculate the annual value of exports and imports. It is stated that the chief exports from Bokhara to Russia are confined to dried fruits and raw cotton, which together cover

about one-half of the value of the imports, consisting of coarse prints, muslins, brocades, furs, fair imitations of Benares kincobs, English broadcloth, furs, nankeens, hardware, iron, brass, and copper wire, leather, inferior cutlery and jewelry, paper, sugar, spices, cochineal, honey, wax, glass-ware, &c., &c. From India, chiefly through the medium of Afghan merchants, Bokhara receives Dacca muslins, Kashmeer shawls, and Benares brocades, besides opium, indigo, and spices—though this trade may be expected to cease, now that Russian ships pass through the Suez Canal and draw their supplies direct from Bombay. A curious illustration of the manner in which commerce finds its own level in spite of artificial restrictions and impediments, was afforded during the blockade of the European continent by the first Napoleon, when British goods were obtained from India by the merchants of Bokhara and conveyed by them to the Russian station at Orenberg.

Some years ago the trade between Bokhara and Kabul amounted annually to three thousand camel-loads,—the return goods being for the most part of Russian manufacture. From Yarkund, again, china-ware, musk, rhubarb, bullion, and tea, are carried across the Pameer steppe and down the valley of the Oxus to Balkh and thence to Bokhara, though the safer, more direct, and usual route is by way of Khokan. The return caravans were laden with Russian merchandise until very recently, but, as will be shown hereafter, there is now a fair prospect that this trade, whatever it may be worth, will be largely diverted into the hands of English manufacturers and Indian traders. The Kashgar traffic is supposed to have amounted to about 1000 camel-loads annually, though horses were exclusively employed on the lower route through Badakhshan.

The profits on each article were formerly enormous, but the total value must have been very insignificant. Twenty years

ago, and it is unlikely that there was much alteration prior to the Russian occupation of Samarkand, the trade between Bokhara and her too powerful neighbour did not exceed per annum 5000 camel-loads, valued at half a million sterling. Baron Meyendorf, indeed, in 1820, anticipated a notable increase, if the route were rendered more secure, and to this end he suggested the annexation of the Khanat of Khiva. 'Independently,' he wrote, 'of a great commercial advantage, the acquisition of this Khanat would diminish the frightful traffic in human beings and in Russian subjects carried on by the Toorkomans and Kirghiz, and would also augment the salutary influence of Russia over Western Asia; finally, it would, little by little, furnish Russia with the means of germinating and developing in that part of Asia the blessings of European civilization.'

At that time it was believed that there was only one Bokhariot merchant in existence possessed of a capital of £40,000, and that solitary individual had made his fortune, not by commerce, but by forging Russian notes, and was consequently unable to live in either of those countries.

Readers of the 'Arabian Nights'—and who is there that has not devoured with insatiable interest those rare tales of marvel?—are sometimes disposed to cavil at the constant recourse to the pillage of caravans as part of the permanent machinery for the development of personal adventures, but it is, in fact, only one of the many illustrations of the general truthfulness of those charming delineations of social life in Asia prior to the introduction of European influences. Modern travellers assure us that caravans between Russia and Bohhara have been always liable to be attacked and plundered by the Khivans and Kirghiz, between Bokhara and Meshed by the Toorkomans, between Bokhara and Kabul by the Eleuths and Hazarehs, and so forth. Neither life nor property was secure,

and it was only the prospect of immense gains that induced traders to encounter such imminent peril.

In Bokhara there were no export duties of any kind, and on imports Mohammedans were charged the orthodox 2½ per cent. *ad valorem*, Hindoos 5 per cent., and Christians four times as much as Hindoos. It was not, however, of the actual duties that traders complained so much as of the exactions and rapacity of the subordinate officials.

British manufactures have always been in greater requisition than those of any other country. 'The Oozbeg ladies,' according to M. Vambery, 'when admiring the texture of the English or Cabul chintzes, generally remarked, "One Russian thread may be split in three Cabul threads, and while the colour of an English kerchief will stand the sun of three summers, the Russian fabric will scarcely keep for a single summer." Similar were the remarks in reference to cloth, and particularly to muslin, of which every well-to-do man must wind at least seven yards round his head in the shape of a turban—a stuff which will be always a standard article for Central Asia.' The Tajeeks, however, in whose hands the trade with Russia almost exclusively centres, have not scrupled to invent the most absurd tales to discredit English manufactures—asserting, for instance, that swine fat is used in bleaching muslins intended for turbans. English manufacturers, too, frequently fall into the egregious mistake of imprinting the figures of birds and animals upon their goods, forgetful of the prohibition of the Koran against the making likenesses of any creature that moves on the earth, in the air, or in the waters. Stripes, checks, and arabesques are the safest patterns.

Caravans for Russia generally set out from Bokhara in the month of May in order to arrive at Nijni Novgorod in time for the great annual fair held from the middle of July to the 20th August—the journey occupying on an average about two months.

On their return they start some time in November, though occasionally much later. The merchants themselves usually ride on horseback, their servants and goods being conveyed on camels. Terrible hurricanes, that last for two or three days, not unfrequently assail travellers on the dreary steppes, and are terribly fatal to the camels. At that season of the year forage for the animals has to be carried, as well as provisions for the men. Strangely enough, the Kirghiz, though such inveterate plunderers, may be safely entrusted with the transit of valuable merchandise.

It may, however, be safely predicted that caravans between Russia and Central Asia will soon become as obsolete as the old stage waggon in England. A safe and comparatively rapid communication by railroad will ere long be established between the Caspian Sea and some convenient point on the Amou, the prolongation of which to Bokhara and Samarkand can only be a question of time. Even more certain, perhaps, is a line from Kesht, Teheran, and Meshed, to Herat, which will bring Russia into direct and easy communication with Afghanistan. *Permitte Divis cætera.*

In acknowledgment of the complimentary missions despatched from Bokhara to St Petersburg in 1816 and 1820, the Emperor Alexander sent M. de Negri in the latter year to Bokhara, accompanied by several gentlemen of high scientific attainments, and with an escort of 200 Cossacks, 200 foot soldiers, 25 mounted Bashkirs, two guns, 358 camels, and 400 horses. Two boats and 25 waggons were also provided. This well-equipped party started from Orenberg on the 10th October, in company with a numerous body of Kirghiz, and reached Bokhara on the 20th December. The first part of the journey lay across an undulating plain intersected by long low ridges, almost entirely bare of wood. 'Barrenness, uniformity, and silence are the characteristics of a steppe.' By the end

of June the heat of the sun scorches the scanty vegetation, and verdure is superseded by the sere and yellow leaf. Stunted brushwood is seen here and there, but only at two points between Orenberg and the Moughojar Mountains is there any appearance of trees. Many little streams were crossed, which in summer and autumn would be distinguishable only by their dry beds, or by a chain of stagnant ponds. On this steppe some members of the mission found fossil belemnites, ammonites, bivalves, and even a shark's tooth, and on the third day they came upon traces of coal which burnt satisfactorily.

While passing through the country of the Kirghiz, Baron Meyendorf paid a visit to Sooltan Haroun Ghazee, a powerful chief friendly to Russia. 'I found him,' he says, 'seated nearly in the centre of a circular tent; his friends sat in a semi-circle on one side; on the other seats had been reserved for us. The walls were hung with carpets. There were also garments suspended from a rope, tiger-skins spread out, a rich lofty diadem set with turquoises and balas rubies, the head-dress of a Kirghese lady. Besides these articles, there might be observed raw meat hanging from a hook, large bags of skin filled with mare's milk, and several wooden vessels.'

The Moughojar hills are a branch of the Ural range, but do not attain an elevation of more than eight or nine hundred feet. Beyond them spread barren plains destitute of vegetation. On the 2nd November the travellers reached Khoja Kul, the first lake they had yet seen, and two days later were compelled to burn ten of their waggons, their cattle being too exhausted to drag them any further. Large quantities of salt had accumulated in some of the depressions to the depth of two or three inches, but very impure and earthy. At Saree-Boulak, on the 9th November, they came upon beds of small shells and fish bones, two or three feet thick, and their Kirghiz escort assured them that their fathers had seen the Aral washing the base of

that ridge, though it was then forty miles distant. They now entered upon the dreary expanse of the Karakum, or Black Sands, though the sands are of the usual colour.

The terrors of this dreary track have, however, disappeared since it passed under Russian domination. 'The sands of Kara-Kum,' wrote the late military correspondent of the *Golos*, 'which border the north-east shore of the Aral Sea, have always been considered among the chief obstacles on the Orsk-Kazali road, terrible to the imagination of all travellers, and to remedy which every effort has hitherto proved vain. We entered the Kara-Kum sands with some feelings of nervousness, but were from the very first agreeably surprised at the first station of the Turkestan region, Djulius, which appeared to us as a pretty cottage, with large windows and a sloping roof. Inside the station the cleanliness, and even comfort, were such as to remind us at once of another country, and cause us to forget all our experiences of the earth huts and kibitkas. It was pleasant to stretch oneself out in this roomy apartment, to eat and drink tea in a European fashion, sitting at a table, a custom to which we had long been strangers in the postal kibitkas and earth huts. It was still more agreeable to hear that we should find such comfortable cottages all the way to Kazali. Travelling over the frozen sands, which were here and there visible from beneath the snow, was not very difficult. The horses in the whole of the Turkestan region are contracted for by a Siberian merchant, Kuznekoff, at 800 roubles per pair per annum, and, contrary to the custom of the country, are fed with hay and barley produced in the neighbourhood. The sands of Kara-Kum extend for a distance of 200 versts on the Orsk-Kazali road between the station of Terekli and Galoffsk, but in order to ease the horses and increase the rate of travelling, the whole of this distance is divided into very short stages, and the stations are placed close to one another at distances varying

from 9 to 17 versts. Such are the very rational arrangements that the most difficult stages, owing to the softness of the sands, are the 9 versts between the stations of Nicolaieffsk and Alta-Kuduk, and 16⅔ versts from the last station to Ak-djulpask, in all, 25 versts. All the rest of the distance these dreadful sands, according to the accounts of all those who have frequently crossed them, with the present organization of post stations and driving do not present any exceptional difficulties, and certainly are not worse than the sands of the Murom forest, the neighbourhood of Moghileff, and other such-like parts of European Russia and the Caucasus. Notwithstanding the porous nature of the sand, the hillocks (here called *barkhan*) are covered with clumps of grass and bushes, such as the saxaul, which is the chief fuel in this country; they cannot, therefore, be compared with the drifting sands of Egypt and the Great Sahara. In this sandy steppe the Nomads can always find better pasturage for their herds than in the neighbouring clayey saline steppe of the Irghiz district. Water, too, is more abundant in the sands of Kara-Kum at less depths and of better quality than in the adjoining steppes of Orenberg, the elevated plateau of Ust-Urt, or even the desiccated channel of the Amu Daria. The principal post-stations in the Kara-Kum are supplied with water from wells dug to a depth of 6 ft. to 14 ft.'

On the 19th November, forty-one days after leaving Orenberg, M. de Negri and his companions crossed the Syr Darya opposite Karatepeh. The rate of travelling has improved since then, for in 1873 the Grand Duke Nicholas Constantinovitch and suite left Orenberg on the 23rd of February, 'fortified with a good luncheon,' and on the 3rd of March, 'about 10 o'clock in the evening, in a bright light, arrived safely at Kazali.' From Karatepeh to the mouth of the river extends a vast plain of grass, rushes, and reeds. Along the southern bank the Karakalpaks roamed free and independent until the commencement

of the present century, but since then have been subject sometimes to Khiva, at other times to Bokhara. To the south of the Syr Darya is the channel of the Yany Darya, pronounced Jan-i-Darya by the Kirghiz, now fast drying up. The country between the two rivers—though the latter is simply a branch of the former—consists of a hard clay intersected with sandy hillocks, and partially covered with a copse of saxaul and wormwood, the haunts of wolves, wild cats, and tigers. Ruins of ancient habitations and of disused works of irrigation are not unfrequent.

A broad beaten track leads from the Yany Darya to Bokhara, much frequented by caravans, and during the late expedition against Khiva 'studded by dead and abandoned camels, the impressions of horses' hoofs, the soles of boots, and artillery horses.' Between that river and the cultivated districts of Bokhara the Kizil Kum desert intervenes, so called from the redness not of the sand, but of the substratum of clay. It is about seventy miles in breadth, and entirely barren. Hillocks of sand, from twenty to sixty feet high, alone break the drear monotony. From the summit of an unusually lofty eminence Baron Meyendorf took a survey of the melancholy scene. 'The eye wanders over a boundless surface like unto a stormy sea that has suddenly been changed into sand. In vain do you seek to discover an object upon which to fix your gaze. On all sides stretches a desert unutterably mournful and monotonous; scarce any brushwood, a few thorny shrubs, in autumn not a blade of grass, and in spring a vegetation so feeble that it is straightway scorched up, and reduced to powder. It swarms with lizards of different species, chameleons, tortoises, rats, marmots, jerboas, magpies, vultures, and with numbers of birds with a bluish plumage, not unlike crows, though much smaller. Such are the living creatures that venture into this desert, notwithstanding its sterility.' A vast unpeopled tract extends from the

Syr Darya to the Amou Darya, separating Bokhara from the Kirghiz steppes, and Khokan from Khiva.

After emerging from the Kizil Kum the mission traversed a plain for about thirty miles, overgrown with wormwood, and bounded on the right by the Boukan range, which rises to the height of 600 feet. Though not lofty, these mountains are precipitous and intersected by narrow ravines. This hilly region gave place to another plain, succeeded in its turn by a wide tract of loose sand, after which the ground again rose to a considerable altitude. Traversing another plain about thirty miles in width, and shut in by distant hills, the wearied travellers were at length cheered by the sight of a hundred mulberry trees planted round a well of sulphurous water, and on the 15th December arrived at Aghatma on the borders of the cultivated portion of the Khanat. Here they feasted on new white bread —a delightful change after seventy days of hard biscuits—delicious grapes, water melons, and pomegranates. The horses fell ill from over-eating, and fifty died after reaching Bokhara from change of diet, and the effects of fatigue.

From Aghatma the plain sloped gradually upwards to the belt of cultivation, which began suddenly after crossing a series of sandy hillocks. From this point to the capital, there was a pleasing succession of canals, trees, houses, gardens, villages, orchards, mosques, and minarets. On the 20th December the mission entered Bokhara in soldierly array, and remained till the 22nd March, 1821.

The interval was advantageously employed in collecting as much information as possible respecting the resources of the Khanat, the system of government, and the manners of the people. Upon the whole, the result of these inquiries made upon Baron Meyendorf, at least, not a very favourable impression. 'Never,' he says, 'have I beheld among the Bokhariots a countenance animated by gentle gaiety; never have I wit-

nessed a spark of disinterestedness, never a good action.'

On the other hand, the Russians were as little admired by the Bokhariots. Sir Alexander Burnes, speaking of a period twelve years posterior to M. de Negri's mission, observes, 'They—the Russians—have impressed the whole of the Uzbegs with high notions of their power, to the detriment of all other European nations; but they have yet to eradicate by their future conduct other opinions which have been as universally adopted, that they want truth and honour in their diplomacy.' Sir Alexander goes on to say that the people generally were unfriendly to the Russians, though the latter were no longer bought and sold within the Khanat. In his ignorance of the wonderful improvements that have since been introduced into the military art, he was disposed to regard the conquest of Bokhara as a work of great difficulty on account of the nomadic habits of the inhabitants. 'Regular troops,' he sententiously remarks, 'would be useless, and irregulars could not subdue a race which had no fixed places of abode.' The present generation, however, has been taught the very different lesson that undisciplined valour cannot, under any circumstances, offer an effectual resistance to the skilful combinations of greatly inferior forces armed with superior weapons.

The Government of Bokhara is a despotism as regards the settled population, checked by the influence of the Mollahs. The Khan of Bokhara assumes the title of Ameer ool Momeneen, or Commander of the Faithful, while the Khan of Khokan has adopted that of Ameer ool Moslemeen, or Commander of the Mussulmans. Ameer is, strictly speaking, a religious title, and has therefore been more highly esteemed by many rulers of this State than the more secular designation of Khan. Indeed, they have seldom cared to be addressed as King, but rather as Prophet. The Sultan of Turkey, called here the Khalif of Roum, is the spiritual superior of the Khan, and from time to

time receives presents of money and other articles of value, sending back in return copies of the Koran and of esteemed theological treatises. The Khan, besides, is the honorary Bow-bearer to the Sultan. His personal influence is very great, his ministers merely executing his orders. It can hardly be said that there is an hereditary aristocracy. The most powerful individuals are probably the Khan's domestic slaves, many of whom possess his entire confidence. The Hakeems, or governors of districts, usually purchase their posts, indemnifying themselves at the expense of the people committed to their stewardship. The whole system of administration being based upon the Koran, it is only natural that the head men in towns and villages should be Mollahs, or Khwajas — or Khojas — claiming to be descended from the first Khalifs. Subordinate governors are, to some extent, kept under restraint by the right of direct personal appeal to the Khan, which is enjoyed and exercised by the poorest and humblest.

The Khan to whom M. de Negri was accredited is described as a fanatical libertine, encumbered with four wives and two hundred concubines. He was also mean enough to appropriate all the presents designed for his chief officers of state. Every Friday he went with much parade to the grand mosque, and once a week repaired on horseback to another mosque, preceded by guards and outrunners. As he passed, every one stopped and cried, 'Salaam Aleikoum!' which an officer appointed for the purpose mechanically reciprocated. The order of succession merely requires that the Khan shall be descended from Chinghiz, and, as his most dangerous enemies are those of his own house, whenever he sleeps outside the walls of the capital his eldest son also must retire to the suburbs.

The Council varies, according to the caprice of the ruler, from five to twenty members, who take care to adopt the view favoured by their imperious master. At that time there were

some 2000 priests in the capital, and, as the Khan much affected the priesthood, every one who could read dubbed himself a Mollah. The penal code was severe, and even sanguinary. Adultery and drunkenness were equally punished by death. There was, however, much secret drinking, and concubinage was limited only by each individual's income. Smoking was prohibited, because it is forbidden in the Koran to take into the mouth anything of an intoxicating tendency. Astrology, however, was freely practised, and among the Russian imports should be enumerated packs of playing cards, each pack consisting of 36 cards, and the games all strictly Russian. Every householder was expected to appear every morning at a mosque, or was liable to be driven to it by the police, and at 4 p.m., the hour of evening prayer, when the bazaars were most crowded, all business was suddenly suspended, the police driving out the laggards with scourgings.

The bastinado was administered with great severity on both back and stomach, seventy-five blows being equivalent to a sentence of death. For certain offences a criminal would be tied hand and foot, and thrust into a room swarming with flies of a noxious kind, from whose stings he was generally released by starvation and fever on the third or fourth day. The healing art, so far as the patient is concerned, furnishes a fine field for studying the doctrine of chances. Doctors feel the pulse, but ask no questions. Constitutions are classed under four heads, hot, cold, moist, and dry, and medicines are accordingly prescribed of a strengthening, heating, depressing, or stimulating character, the line being rigidly drawn and no compromise even attempted. Only three arteries are recognized: one terminating in the head, one in the chest, and one in the stomach. The veins are a mystery of ramification. It is not, however, from the absence of disease that human pathology is so contemptuously neglected. Intermittent fevers, for instance, are

long, severe, and liable to frequent relapses after considerable intervals. They usually begin about the end of August, and last till the frost sets in. Small-pox is prevalent and fatal, and cholera by no means a rare visitor. Consumption, dropsy, and weakness from excessive indulgences, are common complaints, and strangers often suffer from total prostration, accompanied by swoons and irresistible drowsiness, terminating in death. Swellings and ulcers on the neck and upper part of the chest are among the ills to which Bokharian flesh is heir; and in children blotches upon the face, which leave deep, and often indelible, traces.

Cataract and a painful tendency of the eyelashes to turn in upon the pupil are among the diseases to which the eye is most subject. Far more serious is a species of leprosy that begins with white specks coming out, which rapidly spread and cover the whole body. The skin dries and shrivels up, while the hair, nails, and teeth fall off. The disease is hereditary and incurable, but is fortunately confined to certain districts. Reference has already been made to the Rishta, a sort of ulcer indicating the presence of the guinea-worm, bred from drinking water drawn from cisterns in summer time, when they swarm with animalculæ. One-fourth part of the population is annually attacked, and in strangers the first symptoms often appear several months after they have left the place. A man has been known to have 120 of these worms at a time.

The only history taught in Bokhara is that of Iskander Zoulkarnain—Alexander the Great, or the Two-Horned—which is read aloud, by the Khan's orders, in a public place, by a Mollah, who receives trifling gratuities from the audience. Geography is nothing thought of; and as for astronomy, there are only five planets, and the sun revolves round the earth. Education simply means ability to read, write, and quote the Koran and a few of the commentaries to which it has given rise.

Persian is the language of the court and the Tajeeks, but the nomad population adheres to Toorkee, the tongue of their forefathers. There are said to be some 10,000 students in Bokhara, for the most part going through a dry course of theological instruction, and the Khan's library, which fifty years ago was thought large, at that time contained two hundred volumes.

The interior of the mud-built houses is as miserable and uninviting as the exterior. Furniture there is none, beyond a few carpets, rugs, and cushions. When M. de Negri was first presented to the Khan, that potentate was seated on cushions covered with red cloth richly embroidered with gold, arranged at one end of a room covered with mean Persian carpets, the walls plastered, and the ceiling of painted boards.

In Central Asia it is not the custom to sit cross-legged as in Turkey, but rather to kneel, the hams pressing upon the heels —a posture almost impossible for a European adult. Visitors are at once served with tea, fruits, and sugar, and are pressed to take some away with them—should they not do so, it is sent after them to their residence. When friends meet, they bow slightly and, placing their right hand upon their heart, exclaim 'Khosh!' After the morning prayer they breakfast upon bread boiled with milk and salt, and at about five in the afternoon dine off a pillao, made of rice, carrots, turnips, and mutton, finishing with tea, prepared as in Europe. Coffee is unknown, as also are spoons and forks.

As proprietor of the land, the Khan derives a considerable portion of his revenues from that source, which then yielded about £400,000 per annum. Of this one-half is absorbed in the maintenance of garrisons in the fortified towns. The priests and the public schools are also a heavy drain upon the treasury. The militia are not paid in money, but hold their lands on the condition of rendering military service when called upon. The Khan's Civil List was supposed not to exceed £40,000, but it is

impossible to fix any amount for his private expenditure.

The army, prior to the dismemberment of the kingdom, consisted of about 20,000 horse, 5000 foot, and 40 guns, many of which were not mounted, or were honey-combed, or otherwise worthless. The militia may have numbered 50,000 undisciplined horsemen, good rather for predatory purposes than for war as understood by civilized nations. Besides these, there were the Toorkoman levies, on whom no particular reliance could be placed, for, though not deficient in a certain dashing kind of valour, they were not amenable to any sort of discipline, and 'fought for their own hand.' In fine, Baron Meyendorf was probably not far wrong when he said that 'the characteristic features of the semi-barbarous Government of Bokhara are superstition, a certain warlike spirit, and covetousness, springing from the influence exercised by that country over the petty khanats that surround it.'

In the January (1873) number of 'Ocean Highways,' a summary is given of a paper by Mr Grebïnkin, founded upon information obtained during a visit to Karshee, from which the following extract is taken:—

'The mountains within the Shahr-i-Subz Valley strike off from the massive elevation twenty miles west of the Iskander-Kul. The northern ranges, uniting with those of Kohistan of the upper Zarafshan Valley, enter the limits of the Shahr-i-Subz Valley from the great mountain knot called Sultan-Hazret Daût, and spreading out, form gorges and defiles, through which issue the right-hand sources of the Kashka-daria. There is no regular general name for these mountains; the natives of the Shahr-i-Subz Valley call them Samarcandtau, and the people of Samarcand give them the general appellation of the Shahr-i-Subz mountains. These are not snowy mountains within the limits of the valley; they gradually fall in height towards the west, finally losing their wild character from the Djam defile; here they are rounded off, and are covered with a crust of earth, and beyond the Karshi-Djam road they dwindle into a closely connected system of undulations. There are several passes over these mountains, which are all practicable for field artillery; that of Djam being particularly easy. The following are the names of some portions of these mountains of the north:—Takta-karacha, Gurć-mar, Bitéü, Ata-kinty, Ayakhchi, Kopkan-agatch.

'The mountains skirting the southern side of the Shahr-i-Subz Valley are

higher and more massive; they belong to the basin of the Kashka from the very point of their separation from the immense snow-capped mountain knot on the north-east, of which the natives do not know the name. Their direction is from the north-east to the south-west; these ranges are snow-covered in the north-east, and are called Bakhcha and Ishkahar: they form a wide semi-circle, and deflect considerably to the south of the valley, filling the southern portion of the Shahr-i-Subz cavity with offshoots of an inferior height. According to the natives the southern water-parting ceases to be snow-covered at a distance of about 33 miles from its separation from the great mountain knot, and declines very rapidly in the south. The direction of the offshoots in the southern portion of the valley is from south-east to north-west. The names of these offshoots, proceeding from the west, are Istalik, Langar, Tash-kurgan-tau, Bakhcha, Ishkahar, &c.'

CHAPTER XII.

BOKHARA—RUSSIANIZED.

BOKHARA—HISTORY—ASPECT—THE ARK—PUBLIC BUILDINGS—HINDOOS—JEWS—CLIMATE—RUSSIAN SLAVES—SAMARKAND—RUSSIAN OCCUPATION—KARSHEE—KHOJA-SALEH—SHUHR-ISLAM—CHARJUI—KARAKUL—SHUHR-I-SUBZ—HISSAR—HISTORICAL SKETCH OF BOKHARA—EXECUTIONS OF STODDART, CONOLLY, AND WYBURD—NUSSER-OOLLAH KHAN—MOZUFFAR-OOD-DEEN KHAN—ADVANCE OF THE RUSSIANS—PRINCE GORTCHAKOF'S CIRCULAR—BATTLE OF YIRDJAR—FALL OF KHOJEND—CAPTURE OF SAMARKAND—MISSION FROM BOKHARA TO ST PETERSBURG—CAPTURE OF KULJA—THE RUSSIAN FRONTIER LINE.

PRIOR to the Chinese occupation of Central Asia the city of Bokhara, if we may credit M. Vambery, was called Jemkend. Bukhar, it seems, signifies a Buddhist monastery, though, according to Abou'l-Ghazee Khan, that word in the Moghul language means 'a learned man,' while Baron Meyendorf discovers its equivalent in 'Treasure of Study.' It may, perhaps, be more natural to trace the modern name to a corruption of Bazaria, by which appellation the district, at least, seems to have been known at the time of the Macedonian conquest. However that may be, the capital of the Khanat is now pronounced Boukara by the Toorkomans, and Bokhara by the Persians.

Although we are assured by Sir Alexander Burnes that 'Samarcand and Bokhara have afforded a theme for glowing description to the historians and poets of all ages,' there is much reason to believe that the latter town was in the beginning a mere fishing station in the midst of a reedy marsh in-

fested by wild beasts. The fishermen's huts gradually clustered together into a village, which, as time went on, assumed the proportions of a town, and the rude art of fishing became supplementary to the cultivation of the land and the breeding of cattle. The ruins of Bykend, about twenty miles distant, probably cover the site of the original aggregation of huts.

Under the Samanides, Bokhara attained to a degree of luxury and refinement not surpassed at that time by the most opulent city in Europe. Its riches, however, tempted the cupidity of the hordes of Chinghiz Khan, and a long period of desolation effaced the memory of its previous greatness. But the advantages of its situation were too remarkable to be long overlooked. On the highway between Europe and China, and surrounded by an inhospitable desert, it was marked out by nature as a resting-place for the way-worn caravans, and an emporium for the productions and manufactures alike of the East and the West. It rose therefore once more into note under Timour,—though Samarkand was the favourite residence of that 'man of blood,'—and continued to flourish under his descendants.

The Oozbeg chiefs who succeeded the Timourides mostly resided at Bokhara, and the wrath of Nadir Shah was averted by the timely submission of the reigning Khan. From that time to the present day no very important changes or chances have befallen the city, and, though fallen from its once high estate, it is still a place of great resort for the traders of Central Asia, while in the eyes of Mohammedans it retains its claim to the honourable title of El Shereefah, or the Holy.

'The aspect of the city from a little distance,' says Baron Meyendorf, 'is to European eyes very striking. The domes of its mosques, the lofty points of the façades of its medressehs, the minarets, the palaces that tower in the midst of the town, the crenellated wall that surrounds it, a lake situated close to the

walls and encircled with flat-roofed houses, or with pretty rural villas, begirt with crenellated walls, fields, gardens, trees, and the movement that always characterizes the environs of a capital, all contribute to produce a most agreeable effect. But the illusion ceases as soon as you enter the town; for, with the exception of the public baths, the mosques, and the medressehs, there is nothing to be seen but mud houses of a greyish hue, massed without order one beside the other, forming narrow, winding, filthy streets, traced without design.'

For the most part the dwelling-houses stand in court-yards, showing only a blind wall to the street. The best streets barely exceed six feet in width, while the majority are not more than three or four feet wide. As almost everybody rides, the confusion arising from the crowd of camels, horses, and donkeys, jostling one another as they struggle through these narrow defiles, is both bewildering and disgusting. The building materials are earth mixed with chopped straw, poplar posts, four or five inches in circumference, being driven in here and there, and at the corners, for the sake of security. The ceilings are made of a hard wood, generally painted in different colours, and the flooring of bricks, except in the houses of the opulent, where glazed tiles are preferred. On the flat roof earth is plentifully sprinkled, as a defence against both heat and cold.

In the almost total absence of glazed windows the interior is, in winter, intolerably cold. In the middle of the sitting-room a brazier is accordingly lighted, over which stands a table covered with a wadded quilt. Around this sit the family and their friends, each holding the quilt up to their chins, while their backs and fingers become painfully chilled. The residences of the rich consist of several small houses within a common wall, and are usually surrounded with verandahs.

The aspect of the people is grave to the verge of melancholy. Every man distrusts not only his neighbour, but his

nearest kindred. There are no public fêtes, and very little private festivity. No merry voices, no sounds of music, break the silence of the less frequented streets. A settled gloom broods over the capital.

The principal building is the Ark, or Royal Palace, built by Alp Arslan eight hundred years ago. It stands on a natural mound enlarged by human hands, about 200 feet high, and rather steep. In shape this eminence is a truncated cone, the base measuring from four to five hundred paces in diameter. The palace is surrounded by a mud wall sixty feet in height, pierced for a gateway, erected by Nadir Shah in 1742, on each side of which rises a tower ninety feet high, affording a secure retreat for the storks in the breeding season. The palace, built of earth, is altogether an unsightly edifice. Inclosed within the outer wall are three mosques, the offices of the ministers, the house of the Kooshbegie, guard-houses, menial offices, and dungeons, one of which is called the Kana Khaneh, because swarming with ticks, which are supplied with raw meat when there is no prisoner to be thrown to them.

At the foot of this mound is a spacious square known as the Registan, lined on two sides with mosques and other public buildings, while the fourth side is planted with trees and cooled by a fountain. This is the favourite resort both of citizens and strangers, who recline in the grateful shade, or inspect the varied wares laid out for view in smart tents or booths. Here also is held the daily market for fruit, vegetables, grain, cotton, and fuel. And here, too, executions take place, and human heads are exposed on stakes, or laid out on the ground, at the foot of the gallows. During Baron Meyendorf's brief stay in Bokhara at least six Persian slaves and two Tajeeks were hanged for theft, and he became familiarized with the ghastly spectacle of the heads of Khivans, Toorkomans, and others.

For all that, so holy a place is Bokhara El Shereefah that

light there ascends from the earth, instead of descending from above as in less favoured lands. Samarkand, says the proverb, is the paradise of the world, and Bokhara the strength of the religion of Islam. Indeed, it boasts of 360 mosques, the largest capable of containing 10,000 worshippers, while the minaret of Mirgharab, ascribed to Alp Arslan, but certainly rebuilt by Timour, towers to a height of 180 feet, gradually tapering away, and formed of bricks artistically arranged in pleasing patterns.

The medressehs, or Mohammedan seminaries, exceed one hundred in number, some no doubt very small, but others large enough to accommodate from sixty to eighty students. They are built like caravanserais, and have little to recommend them from an architectural point of view. They are for the most part well endowed, and maintain a considerable number of professors and resident students in listless indolence. The course of instruction is purely theological, and even more puerile than the disputations of the schools in ancient Christendom. However, for six months in the year the medressehs are closed, to enable the scholars to earn their livelihood by industrial pursuits.

Besides these considerable buildings, there are sixteen public baths of considerable magnitude, and fourteen caravanserais for the use of travellers. 'Asiatics who travel,' writes Mr Shaw, 'do so from one of three motives, and they can understand no other. Their journeys are either religious, commercial, or political. They will cross the whole continent to visit a shrine; they will peril their lives on a trading trip; and envoys are constantly threading their way from one distant chief to another.' The erection of caravanserais has therefore always been regarded as a meritorious work, and no prince is more highly esteemed even by posterity than one who has associated his name with resting-places for man and beast, in a

land where armed robbers roam abroad in formidable bands, where water fails the wanderer at his utmost need, and where otherwise he must pass the night unsheltered, and exposed to heavy dews or drenching rains.

In the capital there are between sixty and seventy wells, upwards of a hundred feet in circumference, a dozen stone steps leading down to the reservoir of stagnant water derived from the canal that flows round the town. It is in these that are developed the germs of the guinea-worms, locally supposed to have caused the 'sore boils' with which Job was smitten 'from the sole of his foot unto his crown.' The canal is opened only once a fortnight, so that in hot weather the water in the wells swarms with animalculæ.

There are several large bazaars covered over, in which each trade has its separate quarter: the two largest are called the Morning and Evening bazaars. The circumference of the town has been stated at eight miles. It is surrounded by two mud walls about twenty feet in height, and strengthened by buttresses. The outer one is in a tolerable state of preservation, but the inner one has fallen to decay. According to some writers there are twelve gates, while others insist upon only eleven, built of brick with a round tower on each side. They are closed at sunset, and a guard of soldiers is stationed at each. There are thirteen cemeteries, and 360 streets ankle-deep in mud or sand.

The population has been variously estimated at from 150,000 to 180,000, of whom three-fourths are Tajecks, the balance being made up of Oozbegs, Toorkomans, Afghans, Kalmuks, Hindoos, foreign traders and pilgrims, Persian slaves, and a sprinkling of negroes and Kafirs. The Hindoos are distinguished from Mussulmans by wearing a small square cap and a string round the waist instead of a girdle. They are demure of aspect and keep much to themselves. Their position is one

of marked inferiority. They are not suffered to build temples or set up idols, or indulge in religious processions. Neither are they allowed to ride within the walls, or to purchase female slaves. They wear a peculiar style of dress, and are mulcted in a poll-tax varying from four to eight rupees; but they enjoy equal rights before the law, and are prosperous in business. Their numbers are computed at about 300, mostly natives of Afghanistan and Scinde.

The Jews are far more numerous, and are said to have been deported from Baghdad to Samarkand, whence they migrated to Bokhara, which has long since been their head-quarters in Central Asia, though a numerous colony of that race is settled at Meshed. They are also to be found in Shuhr-i-Subz, Balkh, Samarkand, Herat, and Khiva, but not in Khokan, Kashgar, or Badakhshan. They are restricted, however, to three streets in the capital, and are engaged in manufactures and dyeing, dealing likewise in raw silk and silken textiles. Like the Hindoos, they are subject to a capitation tax, and are forbidden to mount horse or ass within the city walls. Though suffered to keep the old synagogue in good order, they may not build a new one. Until half a century ago they were extremely ignorant, and few of them could either read or write, while the whole community possessed only two copies of the first three books of the Pentateuch. All this has been since changed. Reading and writing are now universal accomplishments, and comparatively few respectable families are destitute of an entire copy of the Old Testament. For the rest, they are described as a handsome race, with fair complexions, large eyes full of expression, and long faces.

The city of Bokhara stands about 1200 feet above the level of the sea. The climate is dry and salubrious, and very cold in winter, but in summer the temperature never exceeds 90° Fahrenheit, though in the desert it is often 10° higher. The

atmosphere is wonderfully serene and cloudless, and the stars shine with marvellous brilliancy. It is by the light of the stars that the Kirghiz best trace their course over the steppes. As it is now, so was it in the time of the Macedonians. 'Qui transeunt campos,' writes Quintus Curtius, 'navigantium modo, noctu sidera observant, ad quorum cursum iter dirigunt, et propemodum clarior est noctis umbra, quam lux.'

The seasons are very regular throughout the Khanat. The fruit trees put forth their blossoms about the middle of February, and a month later burst into leaf. After three weeks of heavy rain the great heats begin, and last till the end of October, when wet weather returns for a fortnight or three weeks. Frost appears in November, and snow in December. The most intense cold is felt in January, when ice forms on the river to the thickness of three or four inches, and snow covers the ground for a fortnight at a time. At the end of the first or second week in February, the rains commence, and the annual cycle is repeated. Both in summer and winter, violent dust-storms arise, which have been known to overwhelm not only caravans, but entire villages, with the gardens in which they are embosomed.

It may be remarked that no allusion has been made to Russian slaves as forming a part of the population of Bokhara. At present, of course, there are not any, and even Baron Meyendorf in his description of the capital allows for only a dozen, independently of Tatars claiming to be Russian subjects. Sir Alexander Burnes was of opinion that there were not 130 Russian slaves in the entire Khanat. 'The Mahomedans,' he adds, 'are not sensible of any offence in enslaving Russians, since they state that Russia herself exhibits the example of a whole country of slaves, particularly in the despotic government of her soldiery. "If we purchase Russians," say they, "the Russians buy the Kuzzaks on our frontier, who are Mahomedans,

and they tamper with these people by threats, bribery, and hopes, to make them forsake their creed, and become idolaters."* There is a wide difference, however, between proceedings of this kind, and the seizure by force of inoffensive individuals, and selling them like cattle or chattels.

The city that ranks in importance next to the capital, though now an appanage of the Russian empire, is the far-famed Samarkand, the Maracanda of the Macedonians and the scene of the odious murder of Kleitus. It is favourably mentioned by the Buddhist pilgrim Hiouen Tsang, by the name of Samokien, as inhabited by a brave, energetic people, skilful in the arts, and a model for neighbouring countries. In the seventh century it was the entrepot of the world, and much frequented by caravans. Sir John Mandeville also refers to the quantity of silk produced in this valley, and declares that it was so abundant that in Sumar-margo, as he calls the city, it was sold at the rate of 40l bs. for ten francs.

Samarkand is nearly quadrangular, and is surrounded with a wall pierced for six gates. It covers more ground than Bokhara, though the population prior to the Russian annexation was probably not much over 30,000. The citadel, also, is more imposing than the Ark at that city, and the mosques and colleges, built of white marble, are much superior in appearance. The ruined palace of Timour stands outside the walls, but his jasper tomb, beneath a lofty dome inlaid with agates, is still the chief object of curiosity within the town. The gardens around are extremely productive, being watered by numerous canals and tanks filled from the gold-scattering Kohik. There is likewise an observatory erected by Timour's grandson, Ooloogh Beg. The manufacture of paper from silk was introduced into Europe from Samarkand, but the invention seems to have been due to the Chinese.

In the time of the Khalifs, this city was a Metropolitan See

of the Nestorian Christians. By Chinghiz Khan Samarkand was sacked and demolished, and 30,000 of the inhabitants were distributed as slaves among his chief officers. Under Timour, however, it more than recovered its ancient prosperity, and became for a time the capital of his empire, and was embellished with several stately mosques, medressehs, and public baths. Owing to the vicinity of excellent stone quarries, in which captives from distant lands, and especially from India, were constantly employed, even private houses were built of durable materials, and favourably contrasted with the mud hovels of Bokhara, Urghunj, and Khiva.

Towards the latter part of the sixteenth century, Samarkand, previously an independent Oozbeg principality, was annexed to Bokhara, by Abdoollah Khan, but was wrested by General Kaufmann from that Khanat, in 1868, and has since then been retained by the Russians. Prince Gortchakof, indeed, assured Sir Alexander Buchanan, on the 1st November, 1869, that it was the desire of the Emperor to restore Samarkand to Bokhara, 'but that there was some difficulty in ascertaining how this could be done without a loss of dignity, and without obtaining guarantees for the welfare of the populations which had accepted the sovereignty of Russia.'

Again, on the 13th July, 1870, the British ambassador at St Petersburg informed Lord Granville that it was His Imperial Majesty's intention to 'withdraw his troops from Samarkand as soon as the Ameer of Bokhara fulfils his engagements;' and a little further on Sir Alexander explained that the Ameer would be required 'not to appoint any one to the government of Samarkand without General Kaufmann's approval of the appointment being previously obtained, and by his engaging to dismiss and punish the Governor so appointed, if his conduct towards the subjects of the Emperor should give occasion to just grounds of complaint. Under such an arrange-

ment, however,' Sir Alexander remarks, 'the real sovereignty of the province will apparently remain in the hands of Russia.' It has been found simpler and more satisfactory—at least, to Russia—to keep absolute possession of the city, which, from its position on the upper waters of the Zarafshan, holds Bokhara, as it were, in the palm of its hand.

On the caravan road from Samarkand to Herat and Kabul, and about 85 miles to the north of the Amou, the once considerable town of Karshee, or Nakhsheb, stands in the midst of a fertile oasis, twenty-two miles in breadth, watered by the river of Shuhr-i-Subz. Beyond the belt of cultivation extends on all sides a flat, desolate waste, inhabited only by lizards, tortoises, and ants. Karshee is a long straggling town, of mean flat-roofed houses, surrounded by three concentric walls full of breaches, and defended by a mud fort, encircled by a wet moat. It contains four medressehs, a covered bazaar, and two caravanserais, one of which is permanently occupied by Jews. The population does not exceed 10,000. Cherries grow here to perfection, and fruit-trees and lofty poplars clothe the banks of the stream until it is swallowed up by the sands of the desert.

The route to Herat crosses the Amou at Kherkee, a place otherwise insignificant. Timour, however, preferred the passage at Termedh, the Tami of Hiouen Tsang, a small town in a state of decay, and which has never recovered from the ravages inflicted by the Moghuls of Chinghiz Khan. It was here that the bodies of the slain were ript up in the hope of finding precious stones, because one old woman confessed that she had swallowed a pearl of great price,—a statement verified on the spot at the cost of her life. Between these two hamlets is the ferry over against the village of Khoja Saleh, the extreme point of the western boundary line between the territories of the Ameers of Bokhara and Afghanistan.

It may hereafter prove matter for deep regret that the

British Government did not insist upon the line of demarkation being carried due west from that point to the Persian frontier, as the eagerness of the Russian Government to keep Merv outside of the *quasi*-neutral zone is calculated to excite suspicions of ulterior designs, prejudicial to the security of the Afghan dominions at their most accessible and vulnerable point. The reason assigned for objecting to Merv being included within the frontiers of the Ameer Shere Ali, that the country of the Toorkomans, in which that town is situated, is becoming commercially important, cannot be accepted as a serious argument for handing it over to the feeble sway of the ruler of Bokhara, a mere tool or pageant in the hands of Russia. However, it now only remains to watch with a jealous eye the exercise of Russian influence in that direction. If Herat be the gate of India, Merv is the key of that gate.

According to Sir Alexander Burnes, the Amou, at Khoja Saleh, was, in the month of June, 800 yards in width, and twenty in depth, with a current running at the rate of three-and-a-half miles per hour. The ferry-boat was drawn across by a pair of horses, one fastened to each bow by a rope attached to his mane, and the reins playing loose.

About eight miles westward of Bokhara, is the little town of Shuhr-Islam, which claims the honour of being the first place in Mawaralnahr to renounce idolatry for faith in Islam. It is also said to have been the favourite residence of the fabled Afrasiab. In the oft-quoted words of Firdousi,

> 'The spider weaves its web in the palace of Cæsar:
> The owl stands sentinel upon the watch-tower of Afrasiab.'

On leaving Bokhara, Sir Alexander Burnes took a south-westerly course towards Charjui, and crossed the Amou where it was only 650 yards in width, but from twenty-five to twenty-nine feet in depth, flowing between depressed banks, overgrown

with rank vegetation. A kind of dogfish, eaten by the Oozbegs, and weighing as much as 500 lbs., is caught in this part of the river. Six miles on the other side of the Amou he came to the town of Charjui, with a population of four to five thousand souls, standing on the verge of both culture and desolation. In the bazaar were to be seen knives, saddles, bridles, and horse-cloths of native manufacture, while European industry was represented by beads, chintz skull caps, lanterns, ewers, and copper pots. Business was transacted chiefly on horseback, many even of the vendors being mounted, and no women were seen abroad. A strong garrison was usually stationed here, to repress the incursions of the Khivans.

Also in a south-westerly direction from Bokhara the well-peopled town of Karakul is situated near the Denghiz, or large lake,* which forms the termination of the Kohik. Cultivation extends in this direction not more than thirty miles from the capital, and year by year the desert encroaches upon the habitable lands. If Baron Meyendorf be a true prophet, 'the rich and smiling oases of Bokhara will one day become sterile and waste like those of Sejistan, whose ancient fertility is attested by superb ruins, and which are now covered with sand and gravel.'

Independently of these towns there are several hamlets consisting of three or four hundred houses, and many smaller villages hidden away in luxuriant orchards, not unfrequently encircled by a crenelated wall, flanked with towers, though occasionally it is only the gardens that are so defended. A village is generally an aggregation of perhaps a hundred small detached houses made of earth, and separated from each other by narrow lanes. The centre is occupied by a well, or tank, and no village stands far from a canal.

Since the death of Nadir Shah the provinces of Shuhr-i-

* The water of this lake, which is 25 miles in length and fed only by fresh-water streams, is decidedly brackish.

Subz and Hissar have been virtually independent, being governed by Oozbeg chiefs with whose quite nominal allegiance the rulers of Bokhara have been constrained to content themselves. The former State contains the hamlet of Kish, Timour's birth-place, and is divided into the three begships of Shurh, Kitab, and Yakobak. The population is computed at 46,000 inhabitants, scattered among fifty-three villages. It produces cotton of good quality, and several kinds of dyes.

In ancient times travellers from Bokhara or Samarkand journeying to Balkh were accustomed to bear away to the eastward, traversing the rugged, precipitous range of mountains through which the only pass was that called Kohluga, or the Iron Gate. This route has long since been disused, caravans now turning the flank of the mountains and proceeding by way of Karshee.

Of the petty state of Hissar there is little to be said, except that to the old Mohammedan writers it was known as Shaghanian. It is a hilly, but not mountainous district, and in the plains rice is successfully cultivated, indicating a plentiful supply of water. The modern capital, or fortress, stands fifty miles further to the westward than the former city of Hissar, a word signifying a fort, from which the province subsequently received its name.

In the army of Xerxes, the Sogdians were ranged with the Parthians, Chorasmians, Gardanians, and Dadicæ, and were equipped in the Bactrian fashion, with short spears, bows and arrows made of cane, and a head-dress similar to the Median. In the Zendavesta their country is called Çugdha, and by Mohammedan writers the Valley of Soghd. In the time of the Macedonian conquest the town of Maracanda became the temporary residence of Alexander the Great, after the demolition of Cyropolis and apparent subjugation of the Bactrians and Sogdians. There is reason to believe that the original inhabitants belonged to the

great Indo-Persian race, and also that they were subject to the short-lived Greco-Bactrian kingdom. Subsequently they passed under the yoke of the Chinese invaders, and of all the successive hordes that moved down from the north-east, settling in Central Asia but overflowing even into Europe.

In the words of Colonel Yule (*Ocean Highways*, April, 1873) 'we dimly see empires centred there, waxing and waning, and extending sometimes to the delta of the Indus, or to the frontier of China Proper, and coming now and again into collision with Sassanian Persia. But what kind of civilization they had reached, we know not. Perhaps remains of their cities, or cities still older, may yet become accessible, and throw light on the obscure history. A break in the clouds shows us at one period the broad and clay-stained surface of the Oxus reflecting the gleam of gilded pagodas and images of tranquil colossi, with the painted masts and bar-floating banners that characterize a Buddhist country. And thus we gather that a company of Buddhist monks had established their convent amid the reeds and wild-ducks of the Sogdian swamps, as other monks did among those of Ely or Glastonbury. And the very name of Holy Bokhara, in modern times 'practically the spiritual centre of Islamism,' remains a tide-mark in the remote north-west of that strange power of Indian religion, whose traces are found in a diametrically opposite direction as far as Ternate and Tidore. To Buddhism must have belonged the idolatrous sculptures which continued to adorn the gates of the mosques of Bokhara for three centuries after the conquest.'

'But Buddhism was not the only faith that Islam had to extinguish in Bokhara. That of Zoroaster maintained a more obstinate resistance. Long after the conquest, the nominal and enforced converts continued to cherish the worship of their fathers under the shelter of night, insomuch that every native family was compelled to receive an Arab inmate, whose duty

was to watch against such backslidings. And among the few antiquities of Bokhara survives a monument of those days, recalling the subterranean church of St Clement on the Esquiline, an underground mosque bearing the name of the mosque of the Magians.' Christianity was more than tolerated, and during the Middle Ages it was currently reported in Europe that the Tatars were Christians, and that Prester John was the Cham of Tatary.

Early in the eighth century all Mawaralnahr, or the country to the east of the river Jyhoon, was converted to Islamism and governed from Khorassan. Under the Samanian dynasty Mawaralnahr not only became independent, but attained to as high a degree of civilization as then prevailed even in Europe. The Seljoukian period was scarcely less favourable, but in the early part of the thirteenth century the Moghuls broke loose from their native pastures on the Ala-tagh range, and devastated both Central and Western Asia. During the interval of 150 years that intervened between the desolating reigns of Chinghiz and Timour thirty feeble princes followed one another in rapid succession, and left no trace behind them, though in their case uneventfulness was by no means synonymous with modest beneficence. Their respective reigns, however brief, were marked with oppression, bloodshed, and anarchy.

Under Timour, whatever might have been the condition of the rest of Asia westward to the Mediterranean and the Hellespont, Bokhara and Samarkand recovered much of their former splendour, though they never attained to stable prosperity. The descendants of Timour, like those of Chinghiz, were only remarkable for their incapacity, with the exception of Baber, whose early misfortunes were more than compensated by the magnificent triumphs of his later career.

The Oozbegs were the next masters of Transoxiana, and in the sixteenth century Abdoollah Khan caused his reign of forty-

two years to become the standard of all that is good and great on the part of an absolute monarch. With that glorious exception, however, the Oozbegs failed to rise to the height of their opportunity, and were more anxious to institute a number of petty independent states than to establish an empire.

About the year 1784 the Manghit family rose to power. This clan originally came from the north-east of Mongolia with Chinghiz Khan, and settled on the left bank of the Amou, in the district now occupied by the Khivan Kara-Kalpaks. They were at all times distinguished for their valour, but the first to make unto himself a name was the Ameer Maassoum, son of Ameer Daniel, called by his father Beggie Jan, and at a later period Shah Mourad, or King's Wish. This crafty and perhaps half-crazy adventurer obtained the throne of Bokhara partly by force of character, but still more through his affectation of extreme asceticism.

The nominal king was Abdool Ghazee Khan, in whose name Beggie Jan at first pretended to govern, but, as always happens in such cases, the too powerful minister was at length almost compelled by circumstances to assume the insignia as well as the power of royalty. Personally he made great parade of humility, and seemed never so happy as when surrounded by the most learned doctors of the Mohammedan law, whom he often sorely perplexed by the ingenuity of his inquiries. He always purchased and cooked his own provisions, though his cooking utensils comprised only an iron cauldron, a wooden bowl, and some earthen pots. He insisted, too, upon waiting upon his guests, who sometimes found it difficult to swallow the abominable food placed before them, and the most menial offices he performed for himself. His dress consisted of an old dirty green mantle of camel's hair, patched in many places, and the only animal he would bestride was a donkey, which he rode without a saddle. He invariably spoke of himself in the third

person as 'The Fakeer,' though his subjects took care to address him as 'His Excellency the Lord of Beneficence.'

With regard to the due observance of the ceremonies of religion, Beggie Jan was pitilessly severe. He revived the obsolete office of Rëis-i-Sheriat, or Guardian of the Law, whose duty it was to patrol the streets with a body of police furnished with four-thonged scourges, which were laid on to all who failed to recite the Farz-ool-äin, or whose turban was without the orthodox *kesek*, or balls of earth. Small delinquencies were visited with terrible punishments, while death was the penalty for theft or robbery, and for a second offence in smoking, drinking, or neglecting the mosque. Though he himself lived so meanly, the officers of his court displayed great magnificence and even extravagance.

Shah Mourad reduced beneath his sway all the country between the Syr and the Amou, and also made himself master of Merv, deporting the inhabitants to Bokhara and Samarkand. Finding Meshed too strong for him, he declared that the Imam Reza appeared to him in a dream and bade him spare the place in honour of his tomb. It is said that he could levy a force of 60,000 horsemen, and M. Vambery speaks of him as the last Tooranian prince who invaded Iran sword in hand. Possibly the strife might have been prolonged had not the Empress Catharine II. invaded Persia from the Caspian Sea, and diverted the Shah, Aga Mohammed Khan, the founder of the present dynasty, from chastising the insolence of the Ameer who had called him Akta Khan, or Eunuch Khan. The Shah, however, wrote the Ameer a letter exhorting him to moderation and peace. 'We all of us,' so the letter ran, 'owe thanks to God the Almighty, that He hath given the dominion over Turan and Iran, over Rum, Rus, China, and India, to the exalted family of Turk. Let each be content with the position that hath fallen to him, and not stretch out his hand over the frontier

of his own kingdom. I also will dwell in peace within the ancient boundaries of Iran, and none of us will pass over the Oxus.'

Beggie Jan never himself assumed the title of Khan. On his chair was engraven the style he affected to adopt—'Ameer Maassoum, the son of the Ameer Daniel,'—encircled with this characteristic maxim, 'Power and dignity when founded on justice are from God; when not, from the devil.' His death took place in 1802, and he was succeeded by his son the Ameer Syud Hyder Towra, who lived and died a Mollah.

Syud Hyder's son, Nusser Oollah Bahadoor Khan, ascended the throne in 1826, and was suspected of having poisoned his father and five brothers. In stature he did not exceed five feet six inches, but was stout for his height. He had small black eyes and a swarthy complexion, and the muscles of his face at times twitched convulsively. He spoke rapidly and vehemently, but when listening to others he framed his lips to a forced smile. Though at the very outset of his reign he deprived the Mollahs of the excessive influence they had exercised under his father and grandfather, he himself usually dressed as one.

Nusser Oollah is described as a vainglorious, cruel, cunning, profligate prince, who fancied himself superior to all his neighbours because he looked down upon the Afghans, and yet they had succeeded in destroying a British army. In the early part of his reign he was guided by the wise counsels of his Kooshbegie, Hakeem Beyk, but this prudent minister was, after a while, supplanted by Abdool Samut Khan, a fugitive from Kabul, whose counsels proved most pernicious.

In 1838 Colonel Stoddart, a brave but imperious and overbearing soldier, was sent to Bokhara from Teheran by Sir John McNeil, and seems to have acted imprudently in giving some sort of assurance that he would very shortly be accredited to that court by the British Government. Fourteen months hav-

ing elapsed without any letters of credence arriving from England, the Colonel was thrown into prison and so barbarously treated that his nervous system gave way, and he was prevailed upon to profess faith in Islam in the hope of saving his life. General Ferrier states that he could have left Bokhara in company with M. Kanikof, but that he was too proud to owe his life to Russian intercession. If this be so, he betrayed a strange inconsistency in renouncing his religion for the sake of that which he scorned to accept under an obligation to a friendly and Christian Government.

Greater sympathy, however, is generally felt for the gallant, kindly, gentle Captain Conolly, who was despatched from Kabul to Khiva in 1840, and thence proceeded to Khokan by way of Jizak, carefully avoiding Bokhara. In an evil hour he subsequently trusted himself to a safe-conduct from Nusser Oollah, and visited that prince at his urgent request when encamped at Mehrem, not far from Khokan. Notwithstanding the Ameer's assurances, he was seized, plundered, and carried off to Bokhara, where he was thrown into the same dungeon with his unfortunate fellow-countryman.

They were both executed on the 17th June, 1842, but accounts vary as to the manner of their death. M. Vambery affirms that they were put to death in an open place, but Major Abbott declares that Colonel Stoddart was bastinadoed on the feet till the skin peeled off, and being carried back to prison was secretly murdered in the night, his throat being cut and his head severed from his body. Captain Conolly, he adds, was led before the Ameer and promised his life if he would abjure Christianity, and on his firm refusal was taken back to prison, where he met his fate at night by the hands of a different executioner.

Dr Wolff is more circumstantial—perhaps, too much so. According to his informants, Captain Conolly was dragged to

the place of execution, exclaiming in Persian, 'Woe to me! Woe to me! Woe to me! that I have fallen into the hands of a tyrant.' In another place he states that Stoddart and Conolly were taken to a spot at the back of the Ark, where they kissed each other, and the former said to Makhram Saadut: 'Tell the Ameer that I die a disbeliever in Mohammed, but a believer in Jesus—that I am a Christian, and a Christian I die.' Conolly then turned to his companion and said: 'Stoddart, we shall see each other in Paradise, near Jesus;' but Dr Wolff omits to explain in what language this remark was made. At such a moment an Englishman would naturally express himself in his mother tongue, especially in addressing a fellow-countryman, and in that case what he said would have been perfectly unintelligible to the bystanders. The statement seems quite as apocryphal as that relating to his woeful ejaculations.

When the heads of the victims were laid at the feet of the Ameer and the Kazee Kelaun, or Chief Civil Magistrate, a Dervish lifted up his voice and said: 'The blood of these murdered men shall cry up to the Most High against you!' a malediction that brought upon the utterer the bastinado and banishment. The heads and bodies of the English officers were then thrown down a well, and, when the people heard of these things many of them wept and said, 'A great calamity will befall the country by reason of this murder.' The Jews beat their breasts, and evinced their sorrow in a demonstrative manner. The Ameer himself afterwards regretted the rash and unjust act, and often murmured that nothing prospered with him after he put the Franks to death. It must be admitted that for a sovereign who had assumed as his favourite maxim the motto 'Truth and Equity,' his entire conduct with reference to these unfortunate Englishmen was open to grave reprehension.

A few years previous to this shocking outrage another

officer of the Indian army, Lieutenant Wyburd, had also perished miserably within the territories of this hateful prince. M. Vambery, indeed, declares that he died in the desert in consequence of the violent treatment he experienced at the hands of the Khivans; but Dr Wolff, while acknowledging that he had been knocked down and rifled by robbers, insists that he escaped to Bokhara, where he was cast into the Black Well and subsequently had his throat cut on his scornful refusal to renounce Christianity and enter the Ameer's service. Three other Europeans, Giòvanni Orlando, a watchmaker, Flores Naselli, and a Greek named Joseph, were likewise done to death in this reign.

The disasters of the British army at Kabul averted from Nusser Oollah the punishment his crimes so justly merited, nor were his own subjects successful in their attempts to break his galling yoke from off their necks. In 1840 a conspiracy had been formed for that purpose, but its only result was the execution of forty individuals suspected of being implicated. The tyrant was at least consistent with himself to the end. His last public act was to cause one of his wives, who had borne him two children, to be decapitated in his presence, because her brother had rebelled against him.

In 1841 Nusser Oolah Bakadoor Khan made war upon Khokan, whose ruler, Mohammed Ali, was of a gentle disposition and had shown great partiality for the society of Captain Conolly, but he was also weak and too much addicted to love and wine. He was consequently defeated in battle, and compelled not only to cede Khojend but to acknowledge the suzerainty of Bokhara. Having again appealed to arms he was again worsted, made prisoner, and put to death. His capital was given up to pillage and massacre for twenty-four hours, his family and favourites slaughtered, and his pregnant widow ripped open. In 1843 the people of Khokan re-asserted

their independence, and, electing as their Khan their late monarch's nephew, Shere Ali, repulsed the Bokharian army and were never again overcome by Nusser Oollah.

This restless prince next meditated the reduction of the province of Shuhr-i-Subz, but Dr Wolff, according to his own account, caused timely intelligence to be conveyed to the Governor, who cut the dams and inundated the country. That eccentric missionary further states that he was told by Abdool Saamut Khan that Nusser Oollah was advised by the Russian envoy to declare war against Khokan, in the expectation that the latter State would apply to the Government of St Petersburg for protection, and the event justified this anticipation. If this be true, it is not surprising that the Ameer should have afterwards shown scant courtesy to Major Boutenief.

His contempt for the English may partly be due to the shabby presents sent to him by Colonel Sheil, and which were almost an insult. They consisted of a silver watch and two pieces of cloth, altogether not worth above £6. He seems, however, to have had an ear for English music, his band playing our national anthem. The performers, it turned out, were deserters from Runjeet Singh's service, and had picked up the air from the British soldiers.

Nusser Oollah's successor, Mozuffar-ood-deen, found himself, on his very accession to the throne, involved in difficulties not of his own making, but not the less hard to overcome. He was, almost from the commencement of his reign, engaged in hostilities with Khokan, from which he won no laurels, but by which he became entangled in the most fatal complications. As so often happens in the last agonies of an expiring kingdom, the people of Khokan had split into two great parties, hotly opposed to one another. The northern division, from Uratupeh to Tashkend, was governed by Khoda Yar Khan, who was at enmity with Russia; while the southern division from Ush to

Mehrem was held by Khoda Yar's younger brother Shah Mourad, supported by the Kipchaks. It was with Khoda Yar Khan that Mozuffar-ood-deen threw in his lot, and thus brought down upon himself the heavy hand of the White Tzar.

Ever since 1847 the Russians had been steadily pushing forward their stations from Orenberg to the Jaxartes. In that year three forts were erected which gave them the entire control of the steppe, and effectually bridled the wandering tribes, though they at first discountenanced the inclination to settle down to agricultural pursuits displayed by the Kirghiz, lest the latter should give up the breeding of cattle and so diminish the supplies necessary for the military occupation of those inhospitable wastes. Fort Aralsk, now Fort 1, was established at the mouth of the Syr in 1847-48, and two armed steamers proceeded up that river to a considerable distance. In 1853 the fortress of Ak Musjeed, now Fort Perofsky, after a vigorous defence, was given up to the Russians by the present ruler of Eastern Toorkestan, not without suspicions that its reduction was facilitated by the same means that opened the gates of Olynthus to Philip of Macedon.*

During the Crimean war no progress could be expected, but the apathy of Oriental States is illustrated by their neglect of this opportunity to fall upon their common enemy at the moment of his greatest weakness. Nothing, however, was done to check the advance of Russia, and so early as 1854 a Russian detachment, starting from Semipalatinsk, marched southwards to the Balkash Lake, and so onward to the upper

* It is at least remarkable that the 'most heroic resistance' of Ak Musjeed —to quote the official Gazette—should have cost the Russians only 25 men killed, and 8 officers and 40 men wounded. Again, when Fort Perofsky was besieged, a sortie was made but so stoutly met that the position of the Russians, according to their own account, became exceedingly critical. But how ran 'the butcher's bill'? Of the enemy, 2000 slain—of the Russians, 18 killed and 49 wounded.

waters of the Ili, where they established a military station, called Fort Vernoë, a little to the north of Issyk-Kul. From this post they commanded the route from Khokan to Kulja, and threatened the northern frontier of Toorkestan.

In 1863 Admiral Boutakof ascended the Syr to a point one thousand miles from its embouchure, and in the following year Chemkend, Toorkestan, and Aulietta were added to the line of advanced forts which Prince Gortchakof, in his Circular of the 21st November, 1864, affirmed to be absolutely necessary for the protection of the frontier tribes who had placed themselves under the protection of Russia. This line, taken up with great reluctance, produced a double result.

'In the first place,' his Excellency remarks, 'the country it takes in is fertile, well wooded, and watered by numerous water-courses; it is partly inhabited by various Kirghiz tribes, which have already accepted our rule; it consequently offers favourable conditions for colonization, and the supply of provisions to our garrisons. In the second place, it puts us in the immediate neighbourhood of the agricultural and commercial populations of Kokand. We find ourselves in presence of a more solid and compact, less unsettled, and better organized social state; fixing for us with geographical precision the limit up to which we are bound to advance, and at which we must halt, because, while, on the one hand, any further extension of our rule, meeting, as it would, no longer with unstable communities, such as the nomad tribes, but with more regularly constituted states, would entail considerable exertions, and would draw us from annexation to annexation with unforeseen complications. On the other, with such states for our future neighbours, their backward civilization, and the instability of their political condition, do not shut us out from the hope that the day may come when regular relations may, to the advantage of both parties, take the place of the permanent troubles which

have up to the present moment paralyzed all progress in those countries.'

In 1865 Tashkend was captured by General Tchernaief with a mere handful of men and eight old guns, after a severe struggle in the open field. For this officious conquest General Tchernaief was recalled in (simulated) disgrace, and General Romanofsky, who succeeded to the command of the forces in Russian Toorkestan, was instructed to pacify and consolidate the newly acquired territories, and to resist all temptations to further aggrandisement. In that year Mozuffar-ood-deen had taken the imprudent step of marching to Khokan to place Khoda Yar Khan upon the throne, and, not content with sending a letter of defiance and menace to General Tchernaief, confiscated all the property of Russian subjects he could lay hands upon. By way of reprisal, the Russians seized upon the goods of Bokhariot traders in Orenberg, and the Ameer had the assurance to send an envoy to complain of this act of violence. His messenger, however, got no further than Fort Kazali, now Fort 2, where he was placed in confinement. A counter-mission despatched by General Tchernaief to Bokhara was treated in like manner, but not otherwise ill-treated.

The Russian General, avoiding Khojend, pushed on to Jizak through a barren country, until he found himself in presence of a force twenty times more numerous than his own. He retreated, however, in good order and without loss, and gave up the command to his successor, the olive-bearing Romanofsky. But peace was at that juncture impossible. The Oozbegs, after a series of smart skirmishes, had entrenched themselves at Chinaz on the Syr, while Mozuffar-ood-deen took the field with 5000 regular troops, 35,000 Kirghiz, and 21 guns.

The two armies encountered each other on the 20th May, 1866, at Yirdjar, a few miles to the north of Khojend. The Russians had 20 guns, but only fourteen companies of infantry

and five squadrons of cavalry, their total force not exceeding 4000 men. The issue of the fight, however, was never for a moment doubtful. The Bokharian irregulars were thrown into confusion at the very outset by the well-served artillery of the Russians, and a gallant charge drove the entire host into headlong flight. Their camp and artillery fell into the hands of the victors, who affirm that they counted 1000 dead bodies of the enemy on the field of battle, while their own loss in killed and wounded did not amount to fifty.

This brilliant success was followed up by the surrender of a small fort called Nau, and after a siege of seven days the important town and fortress of Khojend was carried by escalade, the garrison suffering a loss of 2500 men, while that of the Russians is again reported to have been insignificant. Convinced of the uselessness of any further resistance, Khoda Yar Khan hastened to save what yet remained to him of his dominions by accepting the hard terms imposed by the conqueror. Not only did he acknowledge himself a vassal of the Tzar, but he also ceded the valley of the Syr from Mehrem, threw open all his towns to Russian traders and residents, and undertook the payment of an indemnity.

Untaught by the bitter experience of his neighbour and ally, the Ameer of Bokhara, in 1866, proclaimed a Jihad, or religious war, against the infidel, in the vain hope of rousing the fanaticism of his subjects and of the nomad tribes of the desert. The first consequence was Count Dashkof's capture of Uratupeh, and shortly afterwards of Jizak. In the following year General Kaufmann made himself master of Yenghy Kurghan, and on the 13th May, 1868, with only 8000 troops, defeated Mozuffar-ood-deen's host of 40,000 men, drawn up on the opposite bank of the Zarafshan. The rout was complete, and the fugitives, on reaching the walls of Samarkand, found the gates closed against them. That once beautiful and opulent

city surrendered at discretion on the approach of the victorious Russians, in whose hands it has ever since remained.

The Ameer fled to the Kermeeneh, and his eldest son Abdool Malek Meerza to Bokhara, while General Kaufmann followed upon the heels of the retreating army. Ketty Kurghan submitted without firing a shot, and the final struggle took place at Serpul, on the same ground that had witnessed the defeat of Baber by Sheibani Khan and his Oozbegs. The Ameer's troops were advantageously posted, but the Russians stormed the heights in the most dashing manner, and the existence of Bokhara as an independent kingdom was brought to a close.

In the mean while, however, the feeble garrison left behind in Samarkand was placed in a position of imminent danger. It consisted of no more than 685 men, most of whom were on the sick list, under the command of Baron Von Stempel. This little band was suddenly attacked by 25,000 Oozbegs and Samarkandians, but resolutely maintained their post from the 12th to the 18th June, when they were relieved by General Kaufmann, but not before they had forty-nine of their number killed and 172 wounded.

The Ameer now laid down his arms, opened his country to the Russians, undertook to pay an indemnity, and agreed to place Russian traders on the same footing as Mohammedans, who are exempted by the Koran from paying a higher duty than one in forty, or two and a half per cent. The fanatical party, however, headed by Abdool Malek Meerza, were indignant at the Ameer's submission, and demanded his abdication in favour of his eldest son, but this movement was speedily crushed by the Russians, who took possession of Karshee, the stronghold of the rebels. The astonishment of the Ameer and his subjects was unbounded when, on the third day after their

victorious entry, the Russians marched out again and restored the town to its lawful sovereign.

There seems to be some doubt as to the ultimate fate of Abdool Malek Meerza, beyond the fact of his marrying a daughter of Shere Ali, the Ameer of Afghanistan. According to M. Vambery, the prince either died in Khiva, or is a secret guest of Yakoob Khan, the ruler of Eastern Toorkestan. In 1869 the Ameer sent his fourth and favourite son Abdool Futteh Meerza, though only twelve years of age, to St Petersburg, the bearer of nine presents as from an inferior, with the covert hope of securing the recognition by the Russian government of his claims as heir apparent. The incident was regarded by Sir Alexander Buchanan as of sufficient importance to be notified to the Earl of Clarendon, at that time Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. The letter is dated St Petersburg, October 19, 1869, from which the following extract is given in the 'Correspondence respecting Central Asia,' presented to parliament during the session of 1873.

'A mission from the Emir of Bokhara,' the British ambassador observes, 'has arrived here, consisting of the fourth son of the Emir, and other members of his family. The ostensible object of this mission is said to be to give information to the Emperor respecting the hostile intentions and intrigues of the government of India and of the Afghans, but it is believed that his principal object is to secure the succession of the throne of Bokhara to the fourth and favourite son of the Emir. M. de Westmann tells me that the mission is merely one of courtesy, but that it is true that the Emir is desirous that his fourth son should be his successor, a question on which his Excellency says the Russian government can have no interest.' Considering the very prompt and decided line of action adopted by General Kaufmann in crushing the pretensions of the eldest

son, it may be permissible to question the indifference of the Tzar's government with respect to the Ameer's successor, unless it be intended to reduce the Khan to a state of direct vassalage, and to treat him as an hereditary governor of a province, removable at the pleasure of his all-powerful masters.

Having thus established their power on a solid foundation in the western portion of the frontier line between anarchy and order, between barbarism and civilization, the Russians next turned their attention to the eastward, and erected several forts between Fort Vernöe and the northern borders of Eastern Toorkestan. Nor did they rest contented with merely strengthening the line of demarcation drawn by Prince Gortchakof in 1864, when it was thought necessary to offer some sort of apology for the recent annexation of Tashkend. Emboldened by success and the supineness of the European powers, the Russian government in 1871 seized upon Kulja without any sort of provocation beyond the standing challenge of the fat lamb to the ravening wolf, and without condescending to offer any explanation of this additional illustration of the policy, to promote the interests of humanity and civilization, sketched in that perspicuous circular.

In this place it may be worth while to trace the exact position of Russia with reference to Khokan and Eastern Toorkestan previous to this last acquisition, as described by Mr Robert Michell in his paper on the Jaxartes or Syr Darya, avowedly derived from Russian sources and published in the Royal Geographical Society's Journal, No. xxxviii. Mr Michell, it should be premised, is by no means a Russophobist. He does not hesitate to express his belief that 'the contributions to science which Russian officers and civilians have made since they have been able to penetrate into the interesting regions of Central Asia, are of greater value and importance than the political side of the question as regards our Indian possessions.'

He confesses his inability to perceive any material benefit likely to accrue to Russia from accessions of territory in Central Asia, and he is fully persuaded that the scientific results of her recent extensions in that direction are superior to all other considerations.

'Those,' he adds, 'who form a correct estimate of the power of the Russians to affect us in any way on the north-west frontier of India, and who know the footing on which they stand in relation to the Khivans, Bokharians, Kokandians, and nomads, entertain only a feeling of pleasure at the prospect of comparative well-being now opening before the degraded fanatics of those regions, and they rejoice to see that a large tract of the earth's surface is being cleared of the dark shadows which tyranny and barbarism have so long cast over it. With these feelings, on the other hand, is mingled a not altogether unfounded suspicion that the position of the Russians in Central Asia is extremely precarious. Their position in Turkestan is so isolated, their means of communication with the mother country so difficult, their forces in the province so slender, whilst the races are so numerically overwhelming, and moreover so mistrustful, treacherous, and fanatical, that they might any day be overtaken by some great calamity.'

Possibly, Mr Michell might now be willing to modify convictions so little justified by subsequent facts, but which were shared by no less distinguished a personage than the late Sir Roderick Murchison, who spoke in equally slighting terms of a Russian invasion of India. 'When we consider,' he said in his annual address in 1868, 'that the Russian forces which have now extended along the Syr Darya to Tashkend do not exceed eight or ten thousand men in the remote provinces they have brought into order, and that they are separated from their great centre of supply by many wild and sterile countries, I trust we may hear no more of this phantom.'

In 1868, as Mr Michell informs us, Russia possessed an area of 143,000 square miles, along both banks of the Syr, occupied by one million of inhabitants, in addition to a triangular slice out of the territories of Bokhara and Khokan, her possessions south of the Syr extending from Khojend and Fort Chinaz to Samarkand. The Russian picket-posts formed one continuous chain from Jizak, eighty miles south of Chinaz, to Uratupeh, 135 miles to the south-east, skirting the base of the Noura-tagh range to the north of Bokhara. From Uratupeh the line tended in a north-easterly direction to Khojend, passing Fort Nau. Bokhara was thus entirely severed from Khokan, and the old caravan route from Khiva to China intercepted and commanded.

Again, Khojend, with its forty-five to fifty thousand inhabitants, was connected by a series of military stations with Tashkend, fifty-four miles to the northward, all the country west of the Urtak-tagh being claimed by Russia in her capacity of protectrix of the nomad tribes. From Tashkend the line of posts ran due north, sixty-seven miles, to Chemkend, and thence through a mountain pass between the Kara-tagh and Alexandrofsky ranges to Aulietta, whence it passed along the northern foot of the latter mountains to Fort Vernöe, which is now connected by a short chain of stations with Kulja. In other words, the Russian flag now waves over the whole of northern Asia with the exception of Chinese Tatary.

CHAPTER XIII.

CHINESE TATARY.

FLOODS OF MIGRATION FROM THE NORTH-EAST — ZUNGARIA, OR SEMIPALATINSK — FORT VERNÖE — THE PROCESS OF ANNEXATION — INTERNECINE STRIFE BETWEEN THE BOGUS AND SARA-BOGUS TRIBES—HABITS AND CUSTOMS OF THE KIRGHIZ—ATTACK UPON A CARAVAN—ISSYK-KUL —SEMIRECHINSK—THE ILI—ALMALIK—THE TRANS-NARYN DISTRICT—KHANAT OF KHOKAN—CHIEF TOWNS—USH—RUSSIAN TOORKESTAN—OTRAR.

From Chinese Tatary issued the migratory hordes that overwhelmed and destroyed what little of Greco-Persian civilization had taken root in the wide-spread regions stretching westward to the high lands of Khorassan, and southward to the Hindoo Koosh. From the contiguous steppes of Mongolia moved the nomad tribes that, each in its turn, overwhelmed the Chinese emigrants, and which, in the fulness of time, were themselves borne down by other floods of population pouring forth from the same inhospitable, but strangely populous regions. It is, indeed, a problem worthy of a Colenso, to reconcile with credibility the ordinarily accepted statements of the countless myriads that are alleged at different periods to have swept over Central and Western Asia. That their numbers were greatly exaggerated by the abject terror of the conquered peoples, may be fairly assumed, and it must not be forgotten that whole nations, including women and children, flocks and herds, rather than mere armies, were in motion—pressing onward like a swarm of locusts, eating down every green thing in their way, and, wherever they passed, creating a wilderness.

It is related by Sir Alexander Burnes how, in the latter part of the eighteenth century, a Kalmuk colony that had migrated to the shores of the Black Sea, being dissatisfied with their new settlement, set out in a stupendous column, three days' march in breadth, for their original home in the far distant province of Kashgar. They numbered one hundred thousand families, including the aged and infirm, children of tender years, and babes in their mothers' arms; and were accompanied by their flocks and herds, and whatever could walk or be carried,—an exceeding great multitude. Though harassed by the Mussulmans throughout their long and tedious march, 1500 captives being made in Bokhara and sold as slaves, the vast host pushed ever onwards until they reached their haven of rest and security. This story is certainly hard to believe. Taking a day's march at fifteen miles, we have a column forty-five miles in breadth passing like the breath of the simoom over the immense tract of country that lies between the Baltic and Eastern Toorkestan, traversing several mountain-ranges, crossing streams of considerable magnitude, and finally arriving at their destination with no greater diminution of their original numbers than is made by the dashing onslaught of kites and crows upon a cloud of locusts 'warping on the eastern wind.'

This startling episode, however, is an exact type of the more extensive and aggressive migrations of the Haiatilla, Toork, Moghul, Tatar, and Oozbeg hordes that have successively been propelled from the 'frozen loins' of the 'populous North,' and the question again and again recurs, How came these barbarians to multiply so fast in those dreary wilds? whence did they procure arms and even armour? how did they maintain themselves and their little ones and their four-footed accompaniments, while crossing the rugged mountains and barren deserts that intervene between Bokharia and Mongolia?

It is, of course, no new thing that a comparatively civilized

and disciplined soldier should be panic-stricken by the shrill, piercing yells, the repulsive ugliness, even by the rude, ill-shaped weapons, of untrained barbarians, ignorant of danger, reckless of human life, and stimulated to frenzy by the presence of their wives, their parents, and their children. And there is, besides, good reason to believe that the ruling tribe, or 'governing classes,' in the settled districts were ill supported by the mass of the population whom they held in subjection. The mere conquest, therefore, of these fertile and flourishing countries by the northern savages has in it nothing very extraordinary, nor is there any cause to marvel at the celerity with which the latter degenerated from their original fierceness, and became an easy prey to the next horde that went forth from the ancestral steppe in search of a fat and pleasant land.

The real subject of wonder is the fact, if it be a fact, that the scanty pastures of Mongolia should have been so much more prolific of human life in the olden than in the present times. The seemingly immeasurable extent of those grazing lands was well described by Defoe, when he makes his immortal hero, Robinson Crusoe, remark: 'We were now launched into the greatest piece of solid earth, if I understand anything of the surface of the globe, that is to be found in any part of the world; we had at least 1200 miles to the sea eastward; 2000 to the bottom of the Baltic Sea, westward; and above 3000 if we left that sea and went on west to the British and French Channels; we had full 5000 miles to the Indian and Persian Sea, south; and about 800 to the Frozen Sea, north. Nay, if some people may be believed, there might be no sea north-east till we came round the pole, and consequently into the north-west, and so had a continent of land into America, the Lord knows where.'

Truly, a mighty tract of dry land, but, one would say, capable of supporting only a thin and scattered population, living on the produce of their flocks and herds. A purely

pastoral people naturally requires a far larger area than one that looks chiefly to agriculture for its sustenance, and society is divided, after the patriarchal fashion, into families, and groups of families, rather than into the confused but coherent aggregations of individuals that constitute towns and cities. These families, no doubt, quarrelled and disputed with one another, and fought together and harried each others' flocks and herds, as in the days when Abram the Hebrew dwelt in the plain of Mamre, and when the five kings, or khans, went forth to join battle with the four.

Indeed, the sole occupation of the men as artificers appears to have been to extract iron from the ore, and forge weapons of war, and occasionally defensive armour. In Mongolia the main difficulty to be overcome must have been the scarcity of fuel, but it is clear that they did contrive to fabricate their own arms, and that armourers and blacksmiths were held in fair esteem. M. Vambery states on the authority of Juvaini, that the original name of Chinghiz Khan was Temourjee, or Blacksmith, and not Temoucheen, as it is commonly written, and it is undisputed that he belonged to the Moghul aristocracy. But, after making due allowance for the exaggerated estimates of numbers to be expected from the conquered, and for the natural proneness of mankind to the marvellous, it can hardly be questioned that the province of Semipalatinsk and the adjacent districts were far more densely peopled in the days of yore than in our own time.

The ancient kingdom of Zungaria, extinguished by the Chinese about the middle of the 18th century, now constitutes the Russian district of Semipalatinsk, and, according to M. Semenof, incloses the centre of the Asiatic continent, the gigantic mountain group of the Tengri Tagh. This region, observes that eminent geographer, 'has served from time immemorial as the point of departure for migrating races from

the high lands of Asia, the cradle from whence they sprang. to the low and arid steppes of the Aralo-Caspian depression, and the still more distant and better favoured regions of the west. It was here, namely in Dzungaria, and on the fertile and smiling banks of the Ili and Irtysh, that the migrating hordes lingered for some time, loth, as it were, to venture out into the unknown plain before them, stretching far away in the sandy ocean that separates Europe from Asia, until a new tide of popular migration forced them at last to strike their tents and depart westwards from their mountainous halting grounds.'

Early in the present century the Russian traveller Madatof, starting from Semipalatinsk, struck away due south, skirting the Balkash Lake and Issyk-Kul, and crossing the Tian Shan, or Celestial Mountains, traversed the country now called Eastern Toorkestan, and finally reached India. The snow-clad Zungarian Ala-tagh may be said to have been unknown to science until within the last fifty years, but has since been explored by the astronomer Federof and other scientific travellers.

The district was occupied for the most part by two powerful clans, the Buruts or Kirghiz proper, and the Kirghiz Kuzzaks of the Great Horde. In 1844 the latter tribe submitted to Russia, which then formally annexed and created the Semipalatinsk district. In order to protect these new tributaries against their independent and troublesome neighbours, Governor-General Prince Gortchakof founded the military settlement of Kopal on a fertile plateau, at the base of a snow-capt spur of the Ala-tagh range.

Russian factories were shortly afterwards established at Kulja and Chuguchak, though both of those towns were actually situated within the Chinese frontier, and prepared the way for future annexation. Kopal soon became a place of some commercial importance, but failed to bridle the Buruts, as the Chinese call the tribe known to the Russians as the Dikokam-

enni Kirghiz. General Hasford, therefore, resolved to occupy the whole of the Trans-Ilian district, in order to secure the flank of the Kirghiz steppe, and in 1854 this work was completed by General Peremyshelsky, who passed that winter with his detachment in the sheltered valley of the Talgar. In the following year General Hasford erected Fort Vernöe at the base of the Trans-Ilian Ala-tagh, at the head of the Almatynka valley, which is described as 'picturesquely wooded with apple and apricot trees.'

'The occupation of the fertile Trans-Ili region,' M. Semenof remarks, as interpreted by Mr Michell, 'well adapted for agricultural and gardening purposes, and in all respects beautifully endowed by nature, had the effect of protecting the Great Horde from the attacks of the Buruts, but placed its nearest tribes in the same position as that occupied ten years previously by the Great Kirghiz Horde.' For instance, the Bogus tribe inhabiting the picturesque valleys and table-land between the Thian Shan and the Trans-Ilian Ala-tagh, were subject to frequent inroads from their fierce neighbours, the Sara Bogus, and applied in vain for help to the Chinese government, on whom they were nominally dependent. In despair they at length had recourse to General Hasford, who despatched a detachment from Fort Vernöe to Issyk-Kul, with orders to survey the country and enforce tranquillity.

The Russian troops on this occasion were recalled before they had penetrated to any great distance into the interior of the mountains, but the case precisely illustrates the position of Russia in Central Asia as described and deplored by Prince Gortchakof in his circular of 1864. 'It always happens,' his Excellency observes, 'that when civilized states are brought into contact with half-savage, nomad populations, possessing no fixed social organization, they are forced by the necessity of guarding their frontier and their commercial relations, to

exercise a certain ascendancy over those whom their turbulent and unsettled character make most undesirable neighbours. First, there are raids and acts of pillage to be put down. To put a stop to them the tribes on the frontier have to be reduced to a state of more or less perfect submission.

'This result once attained, these tribes take to more peaceful habits, but are in their turn exposed to the attacks of the more distant tribes.

'The State is bound to defend them against these depredations, and to punish those who commit them. Hence the necessity of distant, costly, and periodically recurring expeditions against an enemy whom his social organization makes it impossible to seize. If, the robbers once punished, the expedition is withdrawn, the lesson is soon forgotten; its withdrawal is put down to weakness. It is a peculiarity of Asiatics to respect nothing but visible and palpable force; the moral force of reason and of the interests of civilization has as yet no hold upon them. The work has then always to be done over again from the beginning.

'In order to put a stop to this state of permanent disorder, fortified posts are established in the midst of these hostile tribes, and an influence is brought to bear upon them which reduces them by degrees to a state of more or less forced submission. But soon beyond this second line other still more distant tribes come in their turn to threaten the same dangers and necessitate the same measures of repression. The State thus finds itself forced to choose one of two alternatives, either to give up this endless labour and to abandon its frontier to perpetual disturbance, rendering all prosperity, all security, all civilization an impossibility, or, on the other hand, to plunge deeper and deeper into barbarous countries, where the difficulties and expenses increase with every step in advance.'

M. Semenof explains in the clearest manner how the process

of annexation goes on among the restless, turbulent tribes dwelling on the northern steppes. The Bogus and Sara-Bogus clans located on the shores of Issyk-Kul became, he says, subject to Russia, entirely through their mutual disputes and jealousies. 'The first *casus belli* between two tribes is generally a quarrel between individuals. These quarrels frequently arise from such cause as the buying, selling, or paying for goods, or sometimes from difficulties about the land-marks dividing the territory of two neighbouring nomad tribes. Quarrels respecting property among the Kara-Kirghizes are settled by their own magistrate (*beg*). These functionaries are generally men who have been invested by the Kirghizes, of their own free will, with a certain authority, and are publicly recognized as Ministers of Justice. The litigants have recourse to either one or the other of these functionaries, who investigate the case, and fine the offending party for the benefit of the injured: the fine is paid in sheep, which are the currency of the country, and answer to our roubles. The decision of the Justice is generally strictly adhered to, but appeal is allowed from such decision to the Manap (Headman). The Manap has only an intermediate power of jurisdiction, and refers the matter for reconsideration to the nearest justices, whose decision is final.

'If the litigants belong to different tribes, they prefer their complaints to two different Manaps, and the case can then only be finally decided by the Manaps and Justices of the two tribes in Session. In such cases jealousies between rival tribes very often prevent their respective Justices from arriving at a collective decision. The offended party in such case carries out by force the first decision of the Justice by seizing, with the assistance of his friends, the number of cattle fixed upon as the penalty due by the other. The number seized, however, is seldom limited to the amount of the fine, and the consequent sufferers retaliate in a similar way, that is, by a *baranta*, or raid.

'The quarrel is considerably aggravated by the fact that the cattle seized on these occasions is rarely the property of the offender, but generally the first that comes, and that these forays are generally attended by some fighting and loss of life. Men's lives are valued at a certain number of sheep (upwards of a hundred heads); every tribe keeps an account of its losses, and continues to *baranta* until it has fully retaliated by inflicting proportionate loss on the enemy; but, as it is difficult to equalize exactly the losses on either side, a *baranta* very often grows into a regular war.'

The Sara-Bogus Kirghiz, and their intimate allies the Saltees, hold the lesser western portion of the Issyk-Kul basin, and all the valleys of the tributaries of the Upper Chu, and number over 80,000 of both sexes. The Bogus clan, on the other hand, occupy the greater eastern portion of that basin, together with the valleys of the Upper Tekés and the Naryn, and at present do not exceed 60,000, though at one time they were more numerous. Their Headmen were closely connected, —the Manap of the former, named Urman, having given his beautiful and high-spirited daughter in marriage to the son of Burambai, Manap of the latter tribe. Nevertheless, the two tribes went to war in 1853, and in almost every engagement the Sara-Bogus came off victorious, and at last drove the Bogus from the best pasture grounds, and appropriated the entire south side of the lake.

Encouraged by these successes, Urman resolved to surprise Burambai's *aoul*, where the women and children, the aged and infirm, were left while the warriors went forth to battle. The surprise was effected by a chosen band of 600 men, but these were unexpectedly surrounded by the whole Bogus clan, and a terrible hand to hand fight ensued in the darkness of the night. After performing many deeds of heroic valour, Urman fell mortally wounded by Burambai's nephew and adopted son,

Klitcha, and died in the arms of his daughter, in the *yourta* of his son-in-law.

The Bogus now assumed the aggressive, and pushed on to the Tierské, on the opposite bank of which were massed the Sara-Bogus, under the command of Urman's son, Umbet Ala. A period of inaction ensued, as neither party ventured to cross the stream in presence of the other, but at the expiration of a week Umbet Ala, leaving his brother and a small force at the bivouac fires, made a rapid march round the north side of the lake, and, suddenly falling upon Burambai's *aoul*, carried off all his flocks and herds, his women and children. The Bogus warriors hurried back as soon as intelligence reached them that their homes were left desolate, but arrived too late to rescue either their families or their property. The fiery Klitcha, indeed, overtook a rearguard of some fifty horsemen, all of whom bit the dust after a gallant resistance.

After such tragic incidents a pitched battle could no longer be delayed, but the fortune of war was again hostile to the Bogus, who were totally defeated and forced to flee up the valleys of the Tékés and the Karkar. In his sore distress, Burambai, himself a Chinese Mandarin, applied to the Government of Pekin for protection, but all in vain, and he was constrained to transfer his allegiance to the White Tzar. In the mean time, Urman's daughter, with a companion as courageous as herself, effected her escape from her brother's camp, and after wandering for seventeen days over pathless crags, almost without food, the two women joined their husbands on the Tékés, worn-out and famished.

The aid of Russia turned the scale, and the Sara-Bogus, powerless to inflict further injury upon their unfortunate neighbours, followed their example, and in 1858 sent in their submission to the Russian General. Previous to 1850, they had been nominally subject to China, but in that year they annexed

themselves to Khokan. On accepting the supremacy of Russia, they complained of the excessive taxation that had been imposed upon them by that little State, struggling for its own existence.

Captain Valikhanof, a Russian officer of Kirghiz extraction —for a knowledge of whose interesting account of Zungaria, the English public is indebted to Messrs Robert and John Michell —represents the Kirghiz, as clinging to dirt, and refusing to wash even their domestic utensils lest they should frighten away plenty. They never change their linen, but go on wearing the same garment till it falls to pieces and drops off their person. Covered with vermin, they help one another in hunting down the abominable parasites. Among their superstitions is a reverence for fire, upon which they never spit, and a repugnance to stepping over the tether of a mare while she is being milked. Their mourning consists in total abstinence from the use of water externally, and from change of raiment for twelve months, a simple and unexpensive mode of expressing grief. Chastity is not held in high esteem.

Professedly, the Buruts are Mohammedans, but they have no knowledge whatever of the history of Mohammed. They are unacquainted with letters, and their Tatar mollahs are unable to enlighten them. The harem and a savage fanaticism constitute their acquaintance with Islam. They drink freely of a spirit distilled from Kummeez, and are fond of listening to tales of marvel. They call themselves 'Krgyz,' and have a tradition that they are descended from the forty (Kyrk) maidens (Kyz) of a Queen, by a red greyhound (Kezin-taizan). As a fact, they came originally from Siberia, whence they were gradually extruded by the Russians in the latter part of the seventeenth century.

One of their favourite legends relates to a cruel ogre named Alp, who was overcome by the Kirghiz giant Batour in much the same way that Polyphemus suffered at the hands of Ulysses.

The Dikokamenni, or Buruts, possess an epic poem called 'The Manas,' the centre figure of which is the giant Manas. It is full of episodes, that are brought down to the present times in a continuation called 'the Samyatei.'

The chief public games among the Kirghiz are named Baigas, and consist of races and wrestling matches, the prizes being cattle and slaves. They are also given to the milder pastime of endeavouring to pick up a small coin out of a vessel of milk with their lips, while their hands are tied behind them; the fun lies in the player overbalancing himself and tumbling prone upon the floor.

To the same class of amusement belongs the waving of a kerchief by a damsel to some particular swain, who straightway dropping on one knee sits on one heel, and in that uncomfortable attitude chants an amorous lay, in tones said to resemble a donkey's bray. Should his performance please the maiden, the two stand up together in the middle of the tent, back to back, and crane their necks round till their lips meet. Should the singer, however, fail to give satisfaction, he gets a sound drubbing to encourage him to greater exertions the next time. The Kirghiz are fond of improvisation, and tolerably proficient in that showy accomplishment.

Unhappily the Kirghiz are not content with such harmless employment of the hours not given to tending their flocks and herds. M. Semenof presents us with a graphic picture of an attack upon a small caravan that came under his own eyes. As President of the Physical Section of the Imperial Russian Geographical Society, he conducted, in the year 1856, an exploring expedition from Fort Vernöe to the western shore of Issyk-Kul. The object of the expedition was two-fold: to survey the valley of the Chu, and to ascertain the moral effect produced upon the Sara-Bogus by the appearance of a Russian detachment in that valley. This was two years previous to the

submission of that turbulent tribe. The party had proceeded about eighteen miles along the foot of the Ala-tagh, or Dappled Mountains—so called from their dark surface being relieved with frequent patches of snow—and had just reached the banks of the river Keskelen, when they came upon a strange and stirring scene.

'I rode,' says M. Semenof, 'with two Cossacks, half a verst (between five and six hundred yards) a-head of the detachment, the men of which were singing some melancholy air. Suddenly we heard fearful cries a-head of us. Galloping to an eminence in our front, we beheld an unexpected sight. A number of Kirghiz horsemen hurriedly detaching themselves from a group of people, whose cries had attracted our attention, with extraordinary swiftness galloped away from us. The group of people and pack-animals left by the plunderers were on the slope of another hill in front of us, in picturesque confusion. Some of the camels were lying on the ground, others stood unladen; some of the horses were tethered, others ran at liberty, and their loads, which had been ransacked, lay scattered on the ground. Of the ten Sarts (Tashkend traders) who composed the caravan, two lay on the ground bound, one old man was on his knees, and several, half-stripped of their clothes, ran to meet us with cries. My interpreters were behind with the detachment, and though we could not understand a word of the rapid utterances of the Sarts, their expressive gestures sufficiently explained the nature of the occurrence.

'A plundering band of Kara-Kirghizes had been in the act of pillaging the caravan, binding the Sarts, undoing their loads, stripping and searching some of them, relieving them of the valuables they were carrying in their girdles, on their breasts, and in their boots, when a sudden interruption was put to their proceedings by the sound of the distant Russian chorus which had reached them. For some minutes they had listened to the

gradually approaching sounds, and then, seeing the leading files of our detachment, they jumped on their horses and galloped off, leaving the caravan, saved by our arrival, in the state of picturesque confusion in which we found it. The *baranta* men were thirty in number.

'The whole of our party soon came up. We were now close to one of the branches of the river Keskelen, where we had intended to halt, after a march of twenty-six to thirty versts. Here we had agreed to wait for fresh horses to be collected for us by the Russian magistrate of the Kirghiz districts. As we had plenty of time to spare, I called for volunteers to follow the *baranta* men. Fifteen came forward, the remainder of the detachment bivouacked on the bank of the river. I joined the volunteers and we gave chase to the marauders, though we were conscious of the great difficulty of overtaking them, from the fact of our Cossack horses being no match for those of the Kirghizes in speed. However, we did not lose sight of the retreating Kirghizes, or rather of some of them, for the unequal strength of their horses scattered them over some extent of ground; the strength of our own horses soon began to fail, and one after another our volunteers dropped behind and finally stopped.

'The pursuit terminated after sunset, seven of the hindmost Kara-Kirghizes, after lightening their distressed horses by throwing away their arms and even their outer clothing, were going at a foot pace, followed at considerable intervals by three of the pursuing Cossacks also at foot's pace. The Kara-Kirghizes were looking round and apparently contemplating turning back, and falling on the Cossacks one by one. Notwithstanding the superiority of their arms, the Cossacks might have shared the fate of the Curiatii, and therefore determined to return, after collecting everything that had been thrown away by the Kara-Kirghizes in their flight. It was late at night when we all regained our encampment.' Seeing that the

robbers had flung away their arms and even their outer garments, it could have been no very hazardous exploit for three well-armed Cossacks to have tested the accuracy of their aim, but discretion is sometimes the better part of valour.

The large expanse of water known as Issyk-Kul lies in a broad basin between the Tian Shan mountains on the south, and the Trans-Ili Ala-tagh on the north. This vale is 167 miles in length, and fifty in breadth, and is hemmed in by gigantic hills. The lake itself measures 120 miles from W.S.W. to E.N.E., and is about thirty-three miles broad. Between the water and the foot of the highlands the ground is either flat or gently undulating. The elevation of the lake is 4540 feet above the sea level. The Trans-Ilian Ala-tagh on the north side of Issyk-Kul rises to the height of 5500 to 6500 feet above the bed of the lake, and in some parts is not less than 14,000 feet above the sea. The peaks are covered with perpetual snow, but on the southern slope the snow lies in scattered patches. This range rises abruptly like a wall, intersected by a few valleys through which mountain torrents rush down to the lake. On the south side of Issyk-Kul the Tian Shan slopes rapidly upwards to the height of ten or eleven thousand feet above its banks, and with spurs running down into the broad basin.

These magnificent mountains are surmounted 'with an endless row of gigantic peaks in an unbroken covering of snow.' The line of perpetual snow beginning about two-thirds up from the base. The Kungé tract on the north of the lake is described as rocky, unfruitful, and covered with pebbles, with scarce a tree to be met with, except here and there by the side of a torrent. 'Occasionally the white felt *yourtas* (tents) of the Kirghiz herdsmen are seen to peep out of these groves, and the two-humped camel stretches out its long neck, and still more rarely a numerous herd of wild boars rushes out of the forests of thick reeds which surround the copses, or the terrible in-

habitant of these cane thickets, the blood-thirsty tiger, springs from his lair.'

The area of the lake appears to be gradually diminishing, as its tributaries dry up through the snow line ascending, in consequence of the increasing dryness of the climate of the continent. The depth is supposed to be very great, the water quite salt and undrinkable. Except in shallow creeks it never freezes, whence it is called by the Kirghiz, Issyk-Kul, or the Warm Lake, and by the Chinese, Je-hai, which means the same thing. To the Mongols and Kalmuks, however, it is known as the Temout Nor, or Iron Lake. It abounds with fish, resembling carp, but the Kirghiz take no pains to catch them. Its tributaries are forty in number, many of which are frozen up in the winter season, but during the rest of the year are full, rapid, and tumultuous.

There is very little land fit for arable purposes, though many spots are suitable for horticulture. It is stated that an important Chinese town once stood on the shores of the lake. According to Lord William Hay's estimate, from Nijni-Novgorod to Issyk-Kul the distance is equal to a caravan journey of from fifty-two to sixty days, by way of Ekaterineberg, Ormsk, Semipalatinsk, and Kopal. Between Issyk-Kul and Kashgar 250 miles, or fifteen days, intervene. From the last-named town to Leh, by Yarkund, is an affair of thirty-six days, so that a caravan travelling by this route would occupy three months and a half in transit from the great Russian mart to the territories of the Maharajah of Kashmeer, an important rather than powerful vassal of the Indian Government.

The Semirechinsk region—so called from the seven streams by which it is watered—in the vicinity of Lake Balkash merges into a sandy steppe, which appears at one time to have been the bed of an inland sea, that has since dried up, with the exception of that lake and of the two Ala-Kuls. 'With currents be-

coming more and more sluggish, these seven rivers are bordered by high reeds, tenanted by boars, tigers, and other animals.' Only two of these streams now reach the Balkash—the others being lost in the sands. What vegetation there is, belongs to a saline flora.

The Ili, a very considerable river, separates Semirechinsk from the district to the southward. It flows from east to west through a vale a hundred miles in width, and elevated a thousand feet above the sea. The banks are low and depressed, and over two thousand yards apart; the current running with great rapidity. For the last 165 miles the Ili passes through a sterile, sandy steppe, and before discharging its waters into the Balkash creates a reedy delta—the canes forming an impenetrable thicket upwards of seventeen feet in height.

On, or near to, the banks of this river stood the old capital of the Chagatai Empire. Under the Toorks, previous to the rise of the Moghul ascendancy in Central Asia, Almalik—a name signifying 'a grove of apple-trees'—had been a place of much note, but its importance increased under the immediate descendants of Chinghiz.

After the fall of the Zungarian kingdom Chinese settlements were thickly planted throughout the valley, each embosomed in lofty trees, proving, as M. Semenof observes, that 'the artificial cultivation of timber is possible even in so dry a climate as that of Central Asia.' Vines and pomegranates, if sheltered in winter, bear fruit in this district, while apricots, plums, pear, and apple trees flourish luxuriantly. Rice and maize are successfully cultivated, and melons are abundant and good.

Fort Vernöe stands about forty-seven miles to the south of the ford over the Ili, at the base of the Trans-Ilian Ala-tagh, and at an elevation of about 2000 feet. These mountains run nearly parallel with the Ili, and are almost impassable. The fort is 'situated at the point where the turbulent and impetuous Alma-

tynka emerges from its mountain bed: the valley of this river is clad with natural orchards, of apple and apricot trees bearing excellent fruit. The settlement, which has been formed by Cossacks and immigrant peasants, already (1857) consists of 4000 inhabitants, admirably located. The timber for building purposes is supplied by the mountain slopes and transverse valleys, which, at elevations of 4000 to 7500 feet, are overgrown with the Siberian fir. The two Aksai and the two Almatynka streams issuing from the mountain valley near Vernöe afford an abundant supply of water for irrigation, and have already raised agriculture to a very flourishing condition.'

In 1867 Baron Osten Sacken was invited to accompany Colonel Poltoratsky on a reconnoitring expedition from Fort Vernöe into the Trans-Naryn country, which was transferred to Russia by the Treaty of Pekin in 1860, when the Chinese frontier was drawn eastward of Issyk-Kul along the southern spurs of the Tian Shan to Khokan. This district comprises the whole mountainous district south of Issyk-Kul to the borders of Eastern Toorkestan, and includes the two Alpine lakes, the Su-Kul and Chatir-Kul, as also the head waters of the Syr Darya.

At a place called Uzunagatch, half way between Vernöe and the Kastek Pass, a severe engagement took place on the 21st October, 1860, between the Russians and the Khokan levies. The latter are said to have been 40,000 strong, while the former did not exceed one thousand, and to make up even this small force the fort had to be denuded of its garrison and entrusted to civilians and women. In the end General Kolpakofsky came off victorious, and the whole Trans-Ili country was added to the territories of the White Tzar.

Through the Kastek Pass runs the post road from Vernöe to the Syr Darya district. 'Here, too,' writes the Baron, as interpreted by Mr Delmar Morgan, 'a line of telegraph wires to connect Russia with Turkistan is meditated. As we went

through the Pass we saw works in progress for making the road practicable for wheel conveyances, an operation attended by great difficulties owing to the large quantity of boulders which obstruct the way, and the frequent windings of the little river Kastek, whose waters first strike one side, then the other, of the narrow defile. The work was being done by soldiers, and five wooden bridges are ready. The newly-planed hand-rails glistened in the sun, and our Kirghiz horses, startled at so unusual a sight, could hardly be forced across the bridges.'

The time was when this terror of the sapient animals would have been ascribed to their recognition of the fact that the old order of things was passing away, and that the lordship of the mountains and the steppes was transferred from the pillagers of caravans to the despoilers of kingdoms. The Indian Government may well be shamed by the example of Russia in those remote regions, to greater activity in pushing forward public works that answer the two-fold purpose of promoting trade, commerce, and industry, and of augmenting the aggressive and defensive powers of the State.

Baron Osten Sacken's route lay across the long snowy chain of the Alexandrofsky mountains, a branch of the Tian Shan range. On entering the Chu valley the expedition was met by the Chief Manap of the Sara Bogus tribe. 'A gold medal, with the ribbon of St George, and a deep scar on his forehead, were sufficient proofs of Djantai's services to the Russian Government.' Wheat and millet are grown in this valley, while white hollyhocks and the blue chicory flower are everywhere conspicuous. The Alexandrofsky mountains are covered with white pine forests, interspersed with the mountain ash, and relieved by berberry, honeysuckle, dogberry, and wild rose. The Shamsi Pass is described as being exceedingly picturesque, and its Alpine flora remarkably rich and varied. The ascent from the north side was steep and over rough shingle, while the descent to the south was unpleasantly abrupt.

A small caravan was here met with that had travelled from Andijan to Tashkend, Aulietta, Tokmak, and across the Shamsi Pass to the valley of the Naryn, and was then on its way to Vernöe with cotton cloth. 'One cannot help feeling astonishment,' exclaims the Baron, 'at the boldness and enterprise of these traders, who venture in small numbers into parts of the country where their lives are entirely at the mercy of the cunning Kirghizes.'

The Khoskar valley appeared dreary and monotonous, whence a difficult road through defiles and over steep cliffs led ever upward till the last lofty axis was reached, and the Su-Kul basin opened out below. This lake is seventeen miles in length by twelve in breadth. The water is drinkable, but not equal to that of the streams which flow into it, and the fish are of no great size. The banks are covered with short thick grass, but the elevation is too great for timber. The clean white *yourtas* of the Kirghiz added much to the beauty of the scene.

The road thence again ascended, passing through the Molda-Asu defile and a dark green belt of pine forest, with a very steep descent into the Naryn valley, progress being much impeded by boulders and coarse shingle. This valley is about twelve miles broad, the banks of the river being fringed with poplars and willows. On a high precipitous cliff overlooking the vale was a Khokan fort, consisting of 'a number of small buildings, crooked lanes, and hedges,' but the garrison bolted as soon as the reconnoitring party came in sight. The Naryn was crossed at a ford 200 yards wide, where the river divides into several channels.

Forcing their way through a thicket of tall canes the expedition soon reached the Terek, fringed with poplars, the last trees that were seen until within two days' march of Kashgar. A sloping path of hard clay led to a plateau also of hard clay, without vegetation or water. Two days were occupied in

traversing the Jaman-daban Pass, a wild dreary defile, with a flora similar to that of the southern Himalaya. The elevation of the pass above the sea was estimated at 12,900 feet. It looks down upon the Arpa valley, which is divided by a low watershed from the Atbasha valley at the foot of the Tashrobat Pass, much used by caravans, and named from a stone (*tash*) caravanserai (*robat*) built against the mountain-side, and ascribed to Abdoollah Khan of Bokhara. The caravanserai covers a space about forty-nine paces square, and the Kirghiz pretend that the number of the cells cannot be correctly counted.

This pass also is said to be 12,900 feet above the sea level, but may be crossed in six or seven hours, a short descent leading to the Chatir-Kul plateau. The measurement of this lake is given at fourteen miles for the length and six for the breadth, the surrounding vegetation being of a saline character. The water is brackish, but not deep, though it has no outlet. Chatir-Kul marks the boundary between Russia and Eastern Toorkestan, and is about five miles distant from a range of snowy mountains to the south.

The expedition pushed on thence by three forced marches through mountains of decreasing altitude, and satisfied themselves that the descent from that point into Kashgar was easy and practicable. They stopped at last at the Kirghiz fort of Tessik-Tash, eight miles from Artush, and only twenty from the city of Kashgar, passing through fields of wheat, bordered by willows and poplars, with the rural population pursuing their peaceful labours. The hill country above the plain is infested by wolves and bears. Hares are plentiful, and likewise the Argali deer with immense twisted horns. This is a very timid animal, and is chased by birds of prey that terrify it to such a degree that in its headlong flight it often falls down precipices and is killed, or becomes entangled by its horns in narrow defiles whence it is unable to extricate itself.

The ancient kingdom of Ferghana, the Feihan of Hiouen Tsang, is poorly represented by the Khanat of Khokan as at present constituted. Within the last fifty years, however, it extended 950 miles from east to west, while its greatest breadth from north to south was not less than 360 miles. This mountainous region was the patrimony of the illustrious Baber, but in all the great crises of the history of Central Asia it has shared the fate of Bokhara. In the intervals it has usually enjoyed a rude independence, being divided into numerous petty districts, each under its own ruler. Indeed, at the very time when the only chance of retaining a separate existence depended upon the close and faithful concert of all its inhabitants, the country was divided into two great factions, each more bent upon humbling its rival than upon offering a vigorous resistance to the encroachments of the Russians.

Khokan is a mountainous and picturesque region, with productive valleys and excellent pastures. It is watered by several considerable streams, of which the most important are the Naryn and the Gulishan, whose union forms the Syr Darya. The Zarafshan also derives its waters from the highlands of Khokan, uniting in one channel those of the Macha Darya, the Maghian Darya, and the Fan-Su.

The valley of the Fan is described as particularly beautiful. One of its chief features is a burning mountain, a phenomenon due to the ignition of carboniferous strata at no great distance from the surface. Many useful minerals, such as alum, sal-ammonia, &c., are found here. It contains also two lakes, the larger of which, named Iskander Kul, or Kulikolan, is eight miles in length by seven in breadth. In winter time the surface is frozen over, as might be expected from its elevation of 7000 feet above the sea, and it is surrounded on all sides by lofty mountains. According to popular belief it is inhabited by Adam-oba, or water people—possibly, at some former period

seals may have been found here, as they are still found in the Caspian, though not in the Aral.

The silk of Khokan is equal to any produced in Bokhara, but the chief wealth of the people lies in their flocks and herds and troops of hardy hill ponies. The population of the Khanat was estimated by Dr Wolff at three millions, and that of the capital city at 300,000—a fantastic and ridiculous conjecture. So far as regards the town of Khokan it would be nearer the truth to compute the inhabitants at one-tenth of that number, or about 30,000. It is situated six or seven miles from the Syr, and is on the direct caravan route between Bokhara, Tashkend, and Kashgar.

The ancient capital was Andijan, now a place of no importance. Namanghan has also fallen from its former condition of prosperity. Towards the southern frontier the little town of Ush is still frequented by pilgrims wending their way to the Takht-i-Suleiman, or Solomon's Throne, an isolated rock on whose summit the Wise King cut the throat of a camel, at the great Mohammedan festival of the Eed—the surface being still reddened by the blood of the slaughtered animal. Whoso lies long enough on this favoured spot will be cured of rheumatism.

In the seventh century Ou-cha was described by Hiouen Tsang as inhabited by a coarse, savage people, addicted to fraud and theft, ugly and with mean features, and dressed in skins and woollen stuffs. Their redeeming point was their belief in Buddha, to whose service nearly a thousand monks, occupying ten convents, devoted their lives. The district was pleasant to the eyes, being abundantly wooded, rich in fruits, enjoying a temperate climate, and containing jade of three varieties, white, black, and green.

The most valuable portion of Khokan, however, now belongs to Russia. The Sou-tou-li-se-na of the Chinese pilgrim, since successively named Satroushna, Osroushna, and Uratupeh, is

now becoming a place of some importance. Tashkend, or Stone Town, fifty years ago was a badly built town of some 3000 houses, with ten medressehs; but in 1865 was captured by General Tchernaief, and has since become the capital of Russian Toorkestan, with a population estimated at 70,000. Khojend, a fortress surrounded by gardens, situated on the Syr and on the road from Uratupeh to Khokan, was the first-fruits of the victory of Yirdjar won by General Romanofsky in 1866. The Ta-lo-sse of Hiouen Tsang, subsequently known as Talas, Taras, and Toorkestan, has been a Russian possession since 1864; while Ak-Mesjeed, or the White Mosque, fell in 1853, and merged its very name in that of Fort Perofsky.

Few, if any, vestiges remain of Otrar, originally called Farab, once upon a time the capital of Toorkestan. It was taken by Chinghiz in 1219, but is better known in history as the scene of Timour's death in 1405. It is mentioned by Haiton, the Armenian prince, as Octorar, while Pegoletti speaks of it as Oltrarre, and states that it is forty-five days' journey, with pack-asses, from 'Armalec'—Almalik on the Ili.

What remains of the Khanat of Khokan is virtually dependent on Russia, and will be formally annexed at the first convenient opportunity, with a view to 'the rectification' of the frontier line from Samarkand to the eastern extremity of the Tian-Shan mountains. It is simply a question of time, and indeed it little matters to Europe how soon this measure is carried out, provided it be not made a stepping-stone to encroachments upon Eastern Toorkestan. Few, however, will be found to share the late Sir Roderick Murchison's enthusiastic appreciation of the benefits conferred upon science, commerce, and civilization, by the progress of Russian influence in Asia.

In his annual address delivered on the 23rd May, 1870, the illustrious President of the Royal Geographical Society committed himself to an expression of opinion that testifies rather

to his amiability than to his sagacity. 'The day, indeed, has now arrived,' he said, 'and to my great delight, when the Russian Imperial Government on the North, and the British Government on the South, are rivals in thoroughly exploring and determining their respective frontiers, leaving between each dominion wild tracts which will probably be for ever independent, but whose chiefs will well know how to respect their powerful neighbours. These geographical operations are also, I doubt not, the forerunners of the establishment of good commercial intercourse, and are, I venture to think, the surest pledges of peace.'

CHAPTER XIV.

EASTERN TOORKESTAN.

'LITTLE BUCHARIA.'—RIVERS—MOUNTAINS—THE GOBI—THE YAK—POPULATION—THE KIRGHIZ—THE TUNGANIS—HOUSES—COSTUME—MANNERS—HORSES—UGHLAK—COINAGE—MR ROBERT SHAW—LIEUTENANT HAYWARD—SANJU—KARGHALIK—POSGAM—YARKUND—YANGHISSAR—KASHGAR—MOHAMMED YAKOOB BEG—AKSU—USH-TURFAN—KHOTAN—MR JOHNSON.

THE country now called Eastern, and until the last few years Chinese Toorkestan, is more familiarly known to English readers as the Lesser Bucharia, whose youthful and chivalrous monarch Aliris, son of Abdalla, won the heart of Lalla Rookh, the lovely daughter of Aurungzeb.

The appellation of Little Bucharia, when first applied to distinguish Toorkestan from Bokharia proper, was singularly ill-chosen, for the former was actually the more extensive of the two countries. At that time it extended from the 35th to the 45th degree of north latitude, and from the 72nd to the 110th degree of east longitude, and comprised not only Eastern Toorkestan, but also Ferghana and Zungaria, the desert of Gobi, and the Chinese provinces of Kansu and Shensi.

The present kingdom may be described as a depressed valley 400 miles in length from north to south, by 300 in breadth from east to west, shut in on three sides by mountain-ranges of great height, on the north by the Tian Shan, on the south by the Kuen Lun, and on the west by the Bolor chain. It is for the most part a barren and unproductive country. Near the

foot of the hills the soil is clayey or stony, and in the interior sandy, while to the eastward the sand drifts into shifting ridges and hillocks. The air is dry, and rain of rare occurrence, but the melting snows fill the river-beds with an abundant supply of water.

The Kashgar river, or Kizil Darya—'Red River'—flows out of a small lake situated in the angle formed by the intersection of the transverse section of the Pameer chain by the Tian Shan, there called the Artush range. After a course of 300 miles it joins the Yarkund river, which was discovered by Lieutenant Hayward to take its rise not from the Sarikol district as previously conjectured, but from the basin of a small plateau upwards of 16,600 feet above the sea, a little to the north-west of the Karakoram Pass. Abreast of the town of the same name this river, after a course of 420 miles, is nearly a mile in width, and in summer can only be crossed in boats, though in winter it is fordable on horseback. After uniting their waters, the Kashgar and Yarkund rivers merge their respective names in that of the Tarym or Erguo Gol, which after a further course of 250 miles empties itself into the Lob Nor on the edge of the Gobi, a word signifying 'desert.' The entire length of the Yarkund river from its lofty source to its final discharge into that extensive lake exceeds 1200 miles, and below the town of that name it is navigable during June, July, and August.

Another river is the Karakash, which rises on the northern slope of the Karakoram mountains at an elevation 16,800 feet, and, after a course of nearly 600 miles, falls into the Yarkund river. Its waters are much used for irrigation, especially in the province of Khotan, but in winter it is frozen over.

Eastern Toorkestan stands at a considerable height above the sea level. On the west the elevation of the land is computed at 4000 feet, with a gradual slope to the eastward, so that it

does not exceed 1300 feet on the confines of the Gobi. The Tian Shan range, which forms the natural boundary on the north, is known to the people of the country as the Artush or Kokshal range. Though a lofty chain, these mountains present few peaks above 18,000 feet in height, and the passes are probably a little under 16,000 feet. On the southern slopes no trees are to be found, but the northern side descending to the Naryn valley is covered with forests.

The Pameer steppe, which constitutes the western frontier, is a lofty table-land 16,000 feet in height, extending from the Hindoo Koosh to the Tian Shan, to the west of the Terek Pass. This plateau rises on its eastern edge into a range called the Kizil Yart, which descends into Toorkestan by a succession of steep, rugged slopes. It was formerly supposed that the Karakoram and Kuen Lun mountains were parts of one continuous chain, but Lieutenant Hayward ascertained that a distinct watershed and the Yarkund and Karakash rivers intervene. The name Karakoram, generally given to an extensive and towering range of mountains, is locally applied only to the pass, while the mountains themselves are called the Muztagh, or Glacier Mountains.

According to Dr Thompson, the elevation of the Karakoram Pass is not less than 18,660 feet, while the Chang Lang Pass in the same mountains is said to be 18,839 feet above the sea. The chain may be taken to commence about 74° east, whence it runs in a south-easterly direction nearly parallel with the Kuen Lun. The crest averages about 20,000 feet, but several peaks attain to 25,000, while one near the Muztagh Pass rises to the enormous altitude of 28,278 feet.

On the north side the snow line is placed at about 18,600 feet, and on the south a few hundred feet lower. The passes are all impracticable till the end of May, by which time the trees in sheltered valleys are in full leaf and blossom. The

heaviest fall of snow usually takes place in March. Between the Karakoram and Kuen Lun ranges the highest line of vegetation is fixed at 17,000 feet, by the 'Boorsee,' a plant resembling lavender, above which no vegetable life is to be met with.

The Kuen Lun mountains, so called either from their blue colour, or from the quantity of wild leeks with which they are overgrown, until the air is heavy with the offensive smell, lie between 77° and 81° E., and in the 37th parallel of north latitude. The crest averages quite 20,000 feet, broken by peaks rising from two to three thousand feet still higher. Unlike the broad mass of the Karakoram mountains, the Kuen Lun range is a tall narrow wall, of which comparatively little is yet known.

About six miles to the north-east of Khotan commences the Takla Makân, or Desert of Gobi. 'The edge of this desert,' Mr Johnson observes, 'has the appearance of a low range of broken hills, and consists of hillocks of moving sand, varying in height from 200 to 400 feet.' Impelled by the north-easterly gales the sand surges onward in gigantic billows, and is fabled to have overwhelmed 360 towns and villages in twenty-four hours. That places of considerable importance have at times been buried seems to be incontestable, and Mr Johnson mentions a quantity of Chinese tea bricks being found in a town that had been again uncovered by the wind after the lapse of several years. Mr Shaw also quotes a legend to the effect that this desert was once peopled with infidels, to whom Julla-ooddeen preached the religion of Mohammed. The idolaters consented to embrace Islam if he would turn their dwellings into gold. In answer to the saint's prayers that miracle was performed, whereupon they laughed him to scorn, and would have nothing to do with him or his new creed. In sorrow and anger he turned his back upon them, and huge waves of sand came

and covered the land and all that was upon it. At present the chief denizens of the waste are reported to be herds of wild camels, and of antelopes with lyre-shaped horns. The most remarkable feature, however, of the Gobi is an extensive lake, called Lob Nor, which lies in a depression surrounded by mountains of the loftiest character, whose drainage it receives without any appreciable effect upon its depth or area, though it has no apparent outlet. Near the rivers extensive marshes are of frequent occurrence, surrounded by barren tracts. South of the Tian Shan, and east of the Pameer, wide sandy steppes are interposed between the mountains and the fertile districts. Towns and villages naturally follow the course of the rivers. On the plains the roads are sufficiently good for two-wheeled conveyances, but the ass and the dromedary are in greater request than carts. In the mountains recourse is had to that hardy and useful animal, the Yak.

According to Captain Wood, the Yak usually stands about forty-two inches in height. It is covered with hair. Its belly is not above six inches from the ground, which is swept by its bushy tail, and long hair streams as it were down its dewlap and fore legs. The horns are those of the bovine race, to which it belongs. A light saddle with horn stirrups is placed upon the back, and a string, passed through the cartilage of the nose, serves for a bridle. In Badakhshan the Yak is commonly known as the Kash-gow. These animals are as sagacious as the elephant, perfectly sure-footed, and fond of extreme cold. In summer time they ascend to the line of perpetual snow, but in winter come down to their calves which are left below. They go in great herds, which will keep at bay a whole pack of wolves. Their mode of grazing is peculiar. They eat upwards from a lower level to a higher, furrowing through the snow with their nose to get at the short grass beneath.

Their hair is clipt in spring, and woven into various articles.

The tail is the familiar *choury*, or fly-flapper, of Hindostan, though in the hills it is made into ropes. The milk is remarkably rich. The Yak does not thrive in warm climates, and even at Kabul, 6000 feet above the sea, it pines away. The specimens that have occasionally been introduced into Europe belong to a Chinese variety, whose horns are even with the plane of the visage, while those of the Yak of the Pameer and the Karakoram mountains are projecting.

The population of Kashgaria is conjectured at between three and four millions, and comprises Oozbegs, Kipchaks, Moghuls, Mohammedans, Chinese, Tunganis, Kalmuks, and Tajeeks, while the Kirghiz roam over the mountains with flocks of sheep and goats, and herds of yaks and camels. The original inhabitants of Eastern Toorkestan were of the Aryan race, and are largely represented among the Yarkund villagers even at the present day, their descendants being described as tall gaunt men, resembling the typical Yankee in figure, and with long faces, but with good noses and full beards.

About the middle of the second century B.C., says Mr Shaw, the Youchee Tatars were expelled by other Tatar tribes from their homes in the north-east and driven into the districts of Yarkund and Kashgar, where they mastered or dispossessed the Aryans. A small remnant of that ancient stock was cooped up for ages in the valleys of the Sarikol district, in the angle formed by the intersection of the Pameer and the Muztagh, or Karakoram, mountains. Quite recently this interesting colony, numbering from 1000 to 1500 souls, having exhibited symptoms of insubordination, was transplanted by the Atalik Ghazee into the more cultivated regions. Their language was nearly pure Persian, with a few Toorkee words intermingled, but the Yarkund Aryans have entirely lost the language of their forefathers and speak only Toorkee.

The Oozbegs are the most civilized of all the various tribes

settled in this country. They constitute the ruling military caste, so to speak, and have ruddy, brick-coloured complexions. The Kipchaks rank next to the Oozbegs, and constitute the connecting link between the nomad and non-nomad Toorks. They possess much cultivated land in Khokan, but from spring time to harvest are always on the move with their flocks and herds. Some thousands of Kipchaks are enrolled in the Atalik's army, and are conspicuous for their bravery. In general appearance they are like the Kirghiz, but speak a different dialect. The Kirghiz here, as elsewhere, are remarkable for their ugliness. They have narrow eyes, high cheek-bones, thick depressed noses, and very little hair on the face. Though long since converted to Islam they still retain many of their old Tatar names.

'The Kirghiz,' wrote Lieutenant Hayward in his very interesting paper published in the Royal Geographical Society's Journal, No. xl., 'are the Bedouin Arabs of Central Asia, and, like those children of the desert, possess no fixed habitation, but move about amongst the valleys of the mountains with their flocks and herds. Their tents are made of felt, in shape circular, supported on cross pieces of wood, constituting a framework against which rush matting is fixed in the interior of the tent. Felt carpets cover the floor, in the centre of which is the fireplace. A circular opening in the roof of the tent, which can be covered over and closed at will, gives escape to the smoke. The tents are very comfortable and impervious to rain, and will last a dozen years. Each family possesses one, and when a young couple marry a separate tent is provided for them, and they henceforward constitute a separate family in the encampment.'

An average-sized tent is about sixteen feet in diameter, and when moving to a new encamping ground, all at once assist in striking the tent, which is then packed on three yaks, and the

Kirghiz move off to fresh fields and pastures new. They are an excessively hardy race, as men, women, and children alike brave the rigours of winter and the heat of summer amongst their native mountains. Their food is the produce of their flocks and herds, which are driven to pastures, and tended by the men and boys during the day-time; and on the approach of evening return to their folds in the encamping ground. Here the women milk the yaks and goats, make butter and curd cakes, and are employed during the day in carrying water, or weaving the warm material which the wool of their flocks affords them, into articles of wearing apparel. In appearance they are seldom attractive, and are short and robust. The men are low in stature, and generally of spare wiry frame, with high cheek-bones, a low and slanting forehead, and a broad flat nose. Their complexion is a yellowish brown, with a ruddy tinge, and they are mostly devoid of beard, with very little hair on the face, while their features unmistakably exhibit the true Mongolian Tatar type.

The Tajeeks, or trading and industrial classes, are usually good-looking, with a high forehead, full expressive eyes with dark eyelashes, thin delicate nose, a short upper lip, and a rosy complexion. Their beards are large and full, often of a brownish and even reddish hue. They are stouter and with fuller faces than the high caste men of the Upper Provinces of India, though evidently sprung from the same Indo-Persian stock.

All these tribes are Soonees, and regard the Ameer of Bokhara as inferior only to the Sooltan-i-Roum, or Emperor of Constantinople. It was the Ameer, indeed, who bestowed upon their present ruler, Yakoob Beg, the title of Atalik Ghazee, or Leader of the Champions of the Faith, and, more recently, of Ameer. In the Kilian valley, however, dwells a colony of Sheeahs, comprising about forty families, who crossed, some fifty years ago, from Wakhan, over the Pameer, and live quite

apart from the surrounding population. The Kalmuks are Buddhists, and occupy the foot of the Tian Shan mountains. They are partly settled, partly nomad, and fight on horseback with bows and arrows.

In the town of Yarkund, a separate quarter is assigned to the Kashmeeree Hindoos, men of ill repute, deceitful, and mendacious, and particularly obnoxious to the natives of British India. Around the same town are located many Mohammedan Tibetans, chiefly engaged in the cultivation of melons and tobacco. Such of the Chinese, also, as were not put to the sword, were forcibly converted, and are employed as gardeners. On the skirts of the Takla Makân dwells a semi-nomadic, quasi-Mohammedan tribe of Moghul origin, called Doolans, who live in holes dug in the ground, or in mud huts. There are rumours, too, of a fish-eating community, who dress in garments made from the bark of trees, and inhabit the lagoons near the Lob Nor.

The Tunganis demand a more particular notice. At the commencement of the Christian era Toorkestan was peopled by a branch of the great Uïgur horde of Toorks, called by the Chinese Hoeike, Oihor, and Hoai-Hoai. At the close of the eighth century, the Chinese transplanted an immense number of families from Eastern Toorkestan to Kansu and Shensi. The Tagazgaa tribe of Uïgurs, many of whom were Manichæans, and many, likewise, Nestorian Christians, moved in a body from the neighbourhood of Kashgar to the frontiers of China. Near the close of the tenth century the Kashgaree Uïgurs, with their prince Satook Bookra Khan, embraced Mohammedanism, and overran Mawaralnahr, bringing back with them a long train of captives of the Tourgai tribe of Toorks. Many of these subsequently returned to Samarkand, but not a few remained behind, and were called by their own countrymen Turghanies, or Tunganies, signifying 'The Remnant.' Both Chinghiz and Okkodai drove large numbers of the Uïgur and Tungani Mohammedans

into China, who kept up an intercourse with Central Asia, through the medium of the caravans that travelled from Kashgar to Pekin. In Eastern Toorkestan a fusion was gradually brought about of the Uïgurs and Tunganis, the mixed population coming to be called by the latter name or by that of Dungens, though they were better known to the Chinese as Uïgurs or Hoai-Hoai. At a later period, however, the Chinese applied the epithet Tun-jen, or 'military people,' to the Mohammedan colonists settled on the Tun-tien, or 'military lands' on the western frontier of the empire.

The Tunganis, or Dungens, though Mohammedans and of Toorkish extraction, resemble the Chinese in features, and until quite recently used the same garb and speech. They are large-built, powerful men, and abstain from wine, spirits, opium, and tobacco. They are said to be passionate and quarrelsome, but fond of trading and honest in their dealings, and are subject to the spiritual authority of their Imams and Akhoonds.

The Manchu Government having taxed them with great severity and unfairness, besides requiring the men to wear pig-tails, and the women to compress their feet, their patience was at length exhausted, and they flew to arms. The rebellion first took form and shape in a city of Kansu called Hochow by the Chinese, and Salar by the Tunganis, but the first overt act of violence occurred in 1862 at Singanfu, the capital of Shensi. A squabble arose between a Tungani and a Manchu, in which the latter was stabbed to death, when a riot and general massacre of the Chinese ensued. As the Pekin troops were defeated in three successive engagements, the movement naturally gained strength, and spread to the north-west. Such was the resolution of the rebels, or patriots, that when they found themselves unequal to a contest with their oppressors, they would slay their wives and children and, abandoning their property, flee to the mountains.

A Holy War being proclaimed, the Moslemeen brought their possessions to the local or nearest mosque, as to a common store, and the Imams distributed arms, food, and clothing to all who applied for aid. The Buddhist Temples were razed to the ground, but robbery was severely punished. The Chinese garb was discarded, and the choice was offered to Chinese adults of becoming Mussulmans or serfs. It will be more convenient, however, to narrate the sequence of this revolt in its proper place in the historical sketch of Eastern Toorkestan.*

Dwelling-houses in Eastern Toorkestan may be more comfortable than a tent, but they are devoid of all pretensions to elegance. The rooms are disposed round the sides of a courtyard, upon which they open, and occasionally a verandah shields them from the sun. The cooking fire is made up in the middle of the courtyard. ' Lieutenant Hayward mentions the use of unburnt bricks as building materials, but this must have been an exceptional case, as both Captain Valikhanof and Mr Shaw describe the generality of houses—at least in villages —as being built of mud. 'The walls,' says the latter traveller, 'were all of mud, a couple of feet thick. A straight thick log of poplar supported the roof of the room, passing from wall to wall, while small sticks were laid across from each side, resting on this beam in the middle. A good coating of dry mud on the top of this formed the roof, through which a small opening was left near the door to give light. After entering, a step led up to the floor of the room, which was covered with felt carpeting. There were shelves for cups and dishes all round the room, and a large wooden bedstead at one side, with a great quantity of good bedding. The fire-place projected from the wall, forming a kind of arch about four feet high; behind which the chimney went up through the wall. About a foot from the hearth were

* The foregoing particulars are taken from an able and exhaustive article in the *Edinburgh Review* for April, 1868.

recesses on both sides to hold the cooking pots over the fire. Several vessels for water were standing in the corner, being large double calabashes, the larger half below, and the smaller above, joined by a neck round which a rope is tied. There was another smaller room in the house; also several store rooms, and a large cattle house. Outside the courtyard was a small shed for the fowls.'

In the houses of the rich, small windows are introduced, closed with glazed paper. The inner walls, also, are stuccoed, and the niches adorned with scroll patterns. The housework is performed by women, and in wealthy families by slaves, both male and female, brought from Badakhshan and Chitral. This abominable traffic was conducted under the Chinese in a peculiarly odious manner. In Chitral parents sold their daughters, if good-looking, to Badakhshee traders for about £6 each, and these disposed of their human wares in Yarkund for prices varying from £20 to £25 a-head. The slave trade, however, has been abolished by the Atalik Ghâzee, though not domestic slavery, but in the East that form of servitude is usually very mild. In towns the women go about veiled, but not so in rural districts, and they are everywhere allowed considerable liberty. In Yarkund and Kashgar the streets are patrolled at certain hours by the Kâzi, attended by half-a-dozen men carrying long leathern scourges, with which they flog whomsoever they find omitting to say their prayers at the prescribed periods of the day, and likewise such women as venture out-of-doors without a veil.

There are no indications of individual poverty in Eastern Toorkestan. A sufficient livelihood falls to the lot of all. The costume of the agricultural classes consists of a loose *choga*, or dressing-gown, lined with wool or sheep's-skin, and girt round the waist with a cord, or roll of cloth; a round cap, lined with sheep or lamb's wool; felt stockings, and boots of untanned

leather. The *choga* is usually of a grey or drab colour, except on festal occasions, when bright hues are preferred and the cap replaced by a white or coloured turban. The *sipahis*, or soldiers, dress like the villagers, except that they affect silk *chogas* of glaring patterns, and wear a pointed cap like the Afghans. They also indulge at times in turbans of white muslin. Their weapons are a *tulwar*, or crooked sword, and a *jizail*, or long-barrelled matchlock, with which they take a long steady aim, resting the barrel on a rock or other support. Their other accoutrements are two leather pouches, a wooden powder flask, and a coil of thin rope to light their matchlocks. The officers are distinguished by the splendour of their apparel, and the superior finish and smartness of their martial equipment.

Mr Shaw thus describes the outward appearance of a dashing young Yoozbashee, or Centurion, who escorted him from the frontier to Kashgar. 'He was a young man of apparently little more than thirty years, with a bright intelligent face and energetic manners. His headdress was a green turban. A sober-coloured outer robe covered the richer clothes beneath, and was fastened round the waist by two separate blue belts ornamented with numerous silver clasps and bars. To these belts were attached a silver-hilted sabre much curved, and a series of nondescript articles, including pouches of embroidered leather, a priming flask of peculiar shape, &c. The ends of a pair of very wide trousers of soft yellow leather, covered with embroidery, were just visible below his robe, and his feet were enclosed in boots, or rather high mocassins of the same, with a row of silver nailheads round the soles. He rode a small but handsome grey, with an almost Arab look about the head, but a heavier neck, and his seat on horseback was perfection.' Within-doors this gay cavalier doffed his outer garment and appeared in 'a Yarkund silk *Khelat*, loose and shining; beneath it a *Kamsole*, or inner robe, of English printed muslin, fastened

by a scarf round the waist. On his head, instead of a turban was a tall cap of dark green velvet, turned up with a fur lining.'

The countrywomen wear a loose *cholah*, somewhat shorter than the men's *choga*, made of a light material in summer, but in winter of a warm material lined with wool. In hot weather they are content with a round silk cap, which in the cold season is exchanged for one of cloth lined with fur or lambswool. Under the cap they wear a white flowing veil, or a white kerchief covering the back of the head, the neck, and ears. They have also long leather boots, mostly red or green. Town ladies get themselves up in a more splendid style. They appear sometimes in two silk *cholahs* of gaudy hues, lined and trimmed with fur or lambswool. The summer covering for their head is a round silk cap, richly embroidered, which gives place in winter to a tall black lambswool cap, turned up, and trimmed with fur or beaver skin, under which is secured a white veil that floats over the shoulders within the house, but is brought over the face out-of-doors. Their feet are encased in long red leather boots with silk tassels, but they indulge in no ornaments. They are often rather handsome, with round pleasant faces and healthy complexions. They are somewhat short of stature, and of a robust figure. They are fond of plaiting long masses of horsehair with their own, and this mixture they allow to hang down behind in two long thick tails.

One of the virtues of this people is a profuse hospitality. A stranger is always greeted on his arrival with a 'Dastar-Khân,' or present of welcome, consisting of trays of fruit, loaf-sugar, eggs, bread, with sometimes a sheep and some fowls shown at the door of the apartment. The bread is pronounced delicious. It is made in large sheets, two feet across, and is unleavened, but as light as a French roll. Equally unremitting is the politeness of salutation. 'If you receive a present, or enter a

house, or finish a meal, it is always Allâ-â-â-ho Akber! The Moghuls pronounce the â very broad in this, as in all other words, sounding it like our *aw*.' When two officers meet they dismount while yet twenty yards off, run forward, and embrace, each putting his chin over the other's right shoulder, with their arms round each other's body. The sitting posture is one very trying to Europeans. The men, at least, kneel down, with their robes well tucked in, and then sit back on their heels; or the toes may be turned inward, and they then sit on the inside flat of the foot.

It does not appear that the Toorkestanees are very proficient in social accomplishments, though quite as much so as most Orientals. Their Andijan neighbours, however, seem to excel them in dancing, nor is it thought a disgraceful exhibition suitable only for itinerant performers. Mr Shaw's light-hearted Yoozbashee favoured him with a specimen of an Andijanee dance. 'It was really a very pretty and effective movement, more like a ballet step than anything I have seen in the East. With bare feet, loose trowsers, and a red scarf in each hand, he flew round the room, changing feet at each step, and waving the scarves in front and behind alternately with each hand.'

The musical instruments in general use are a kind of harpsichord, resembling a miniature piano without keys, played with a pointed instrument held in the right hand, while the left hand follows its motion and stops the vibration of the wires. There is also a long-necked guitar, called 'citar,' with nine strings, played with a bow like a violoncello. Only one string is actually touched, the others being depressed below its level, and helping to swell the tone of the instrument. A slender fife and the tambourine are the commonest of all.

Letters are done up into a thin wisp gummed together, and impressed with the seal of the sender in blank ink, but bear no signature. A superior writing to an inferior makes use of a

small scrap of paper, while the latter in addressing the former seeks as large a piece as he can find. The position of the seal likewise varies according to the respective ranks of the correspondents.

The Toorkestan horses are strong, active, and capable of great fatigue. The saddle is never removed from their backs. The horse-clothing envelopes the whole body, and extends to the neck and head. The saddles are made of painted and polished wood, with a high peak in front, and are raised well above the backbone. The rich are fond of smart trappings, with embroidered cloths and silver mounting. Very little grass is given to horses, but barley or Indian corn without stint. At the end of their journey, the reeking animals are walked up and down till they are quite cool. They are never turned out loose, but always kept tied up. Yarkund ponies are said to be superior to the small Ladakh breed, and will carry from 200 lbs. to 250 lbs. each, across the mountain passes.

Where the roads are good, two-wheeled conveyances, called Arabahs, are affected by the wealthy. They are, in fact, covered vans or tilt-carts, and are drawn by three horses, one between the shafts, and two in traces in front, which are driven by reins and a long whip. The two-humped camel, darker, stouter, and more hairy than the Indian species, is the ordinary beast of burden.

The Toorkestanees justly pride themselves on their horsemanship. Their favourite amusement, called Ooghlak, is practised in this wise. The headless body of a goat being thrown on the ground, the object is to pick it up without leaving the saddle. Going at top speed, they stretch down to it, with one foot and one hand on the saddle. One clutches the prize and swings himself back into his seat, and gallops off, chased by the others. Whoso overtakes him, strives to wrest the prize from his grasp, while another may come up on the other side. Away they all go,

helter-skelter, over banks and ditches, heedless of the path, and with the bridle often loose upon their horses' necks. The consequence is not unfrequently a tremendous fall, and a broken head or limb.

Partridges, too, are chased down on horseback. Soon tiring, they run along the ground, and are knocked over with whips. Black eagles are trained like falcons to fly at deer and antelope. They are hooded, wrapped up in a sheep-skin, and carried head downwards, until within sight of the quarry, when they are unhooded and cast off.

The penal code is peculiar on some points. The punishment for theft, whatever the value of the property stolen, is death by hanging or impaling; but murderers are pardoned, as high-spirited fellows who are likely to make good soldiers.

The coinage of the country is open to improvement. Twenty-five copper coins are equal to one tanga, valued at fourpence of English money. They are strung together, 500 on one string, which is equal to 20 tangas. Two and a half strings, worth seventeen shillings, were given to Mr Shaw for his daily maintenance. A kooroos, or lump of stamped silver, is worth £17 10s.—ten small lumps making a kooroos. Gold tillahs, stamped in Khokan, are each worth from 32 to 35 tangas. There is also a silver ingot, called Yamboo, or Koors, shaped like a boot or shoe, and bearing a Chinese stamp, which is valued at 1100 tangas.

Ten or a dozen years ago no part of Central Asia was less known to Europeans than the country which now passes by the name of Eastern Toorkestan, or Kashgaria, though called by the people themselves Ąlty-Shuhr, or the Land of the Six Cities, while some writers maintain that its usual appellation is Yedi-Shuhr, or the Land of the Seven Cities. Be that as it may, the recent travels and observations of Mr Shaw and the late Lieutenant Hayward—since murdered by the Chief of Yassin—have

thrown so strong a light upon this hitherto unknown land, that its geographical configuration, as well as the manners and customs of its inhabitants, are now familiar to the most general reader, while further information may be expected from Sir D. Forsyth's Report of his late Mission.

Mr Shaw belongs to that illustrious body of 'pioneers of commerce,' who have opened out so many paths of wealth and usefulness to their home-staying countrymen. His first journey into the dominions of the Atalik Ghâzee was a purely personal and tentative enterprise, fraught with much apparent danger to himself, and the fruits of which would be chiefly gathered by those who had neither sown nor planted. No trained diplomatist, however, could have displayed greater sagacity and self-control, while his kindly nature and thorough manliness won the good will and respect of all who came within his influence. It is not too much to say that the favourable impression made by Mr Shaw has been the most potential cause of the friendly feelings entertained towards England by the ruler and people of Eastern Toorkestan. Lieutenant Hayward, again, was an adventurer in the cause of science. He was the able and courageous representative of the Royal Geographical Society, and fearlessly hazarded his life that knowledge might be extended.

By a strange chance it happened that these two remarkable men, perfect strangers to one another and ignorant of each other's projected journey, reached the frontiers of Eastern Toorkestan about the same time, although they never met face to face until they were once more at Yarkund on their return towards British territory. Alarmed by a report that a party of fifty Englishmen—possibly the forerunners of an army—were about to follow in their steps, the Atalik Ghâzee gave orders that the two explorers should be hospitably treated but kept apart, and should on no account be suffered to wander about the country

and take notes. Such precautions were not inexcusable considering the great difficulties of his position between the Russians on one side and the English on the other, with a large portion of his nominal subjects opposed to his authority.

Descending from the dreadful Passes of the Karakoram range, it is pleasant to travel between hedgerows planted with poplar, apple, and pear trees, with a continuous breadth of cultivation on either side, and houses and villages appearing at brief intervals. The town nearest to the southern boundary is Sanju, consisting of a street running into and out of a small square containing a mosque. The so-called street is simply a road between two lofty mud-walls, pierced for doors at about every thirty yards. Each door opens into a court-yard, round which are disposed the rooms and offices that constitute a Toorkish house. From Sanju Mr Shaw rode for four days in a westerly direction across a sandy, undulating plain, interspersed with a few scraggy bushes, and intersected by four streams from the mountains, forming fertile strips and oases, each maintaining a village. On the fifth day he turned to the northward, and passed over broken ground sloping down to the desert, till he reached Karghalik, situated in a cultivated and populous district about seventy-nine miles* from Sanju, and thirty-six from Yarkund. It stands upwards of 4500 feet above the sea, and, according to Mr Hayward, contains 20,000 houses, a spacious bazaar, and several caravanserais.

Twenty-one miles from Karghalik is the town of Posgam with its 16,000 houses, its huge, busy caravanserai, its long bazaar, covered with matting to keep out the sun. This place bears an evil reputation in connection with the tradition that

* Distances in Eastern Toorkestan are measured by the 'tash'—literally a stone. Upon a pile of stones is planted a post, to which is nailed a board, inscribed with the number of 'tashes' to this or that town. The measure may be taken to be the distance that a horse can walk in an hour, which, in that country, is about four and a half miles.

accounts for the introduction of goître into the country. Once upon a time a holy man used to despatch a sagacious camel into Yarkund, without any attendant, to collect the offerings of the pious. Some of the Posgam people, moved by the Evil One, one day seized the unguarded animal, killed, and cooked it. The Saint thereupon uncharitably prayed that the perpetrators of the deed might be made known by some sign on their throat. And he was answered by the goître, which is confined to the Moghul population, and spares both the Oozbegs and strangers from foreign parts.

From Karghalik to Yarkund the road passes through a very productive country, devoid of hedges, but presenting a wooded appearance from the roads being lined with poplar and mulberry trees, and from the numerous villages and hamlets being surrounded by fruit-trees. Water-courses are led in all directions, over or under the road, and across marshes and hollows, while falls and sluices are employed in driving mills for husking rice, and pounding saltpetre to make gunpowder. The machinery is of the simplest, being merely a wheel with a single cog, and a pair of pestles rising and falling. Rice, wheat, barley, Indian corn, carrots, turnips, clover, and cotton are successfully cultivated, while sheep, goats, fowls, and pigeons add to the comforts of the rural population; but neither ducks nor geese seem to thrive, except in a wild state.

Approaching Yarkund, 'the road was covered with people and animals, strings of camels and donkeys carrying bales of silk and goods from Khotan, country produce going in to market, with men and women riding ponies, the latter astride the saddle like the men.' From a little distance the long low line of the city walls rises against the horizon, with one conspicuous object challenging observation. On a nearer approach this is made out to be a tall square scaffolding, with two platforms, one above the other, built over the roof of a substantial build-

ing. 'This is the first thing a stranger sees of the city of Yarkund,' and it proved to be the executioner's stage.

This famous town stands 3830 feet above the sea, and is in shape a parallelogram, measuring two miles from north to south, and one and a half from east to west. The circuit of the walls is about seven miles, and their height is stated at from forty to forty-five feet. Their thickness is said to be very great, and they are strengthened by bastions and intermediate flanking defences. Few names have been so variously mis-spelt. It has been written Irken, Irghen, Jarkan, Yarkhan, Yurkend, Yarkian, Yarghian, Yerkeen, and Yerkehen. Marco Polo calls the town and province Carcan, describing the latter as five long days' marches in length, teeming with corn and fruit, and peopled by Mohammedans, with a commingling of Christians. The city at one time had fallen to decay, till a Toorkish Sultan, named Abou Bekr, made it his capital, about the close of the 9th century, and constructed a citadel and many canals of irrigation.

Benedict Goës, who travelled in these parts about the year 1403, makes mention of Hiarchan, 'the capital of the kingdom of Cascar,' as 'a mart of much note, both for the great concourse of merchants, and from the variety of wares.' The caravan from India to China always halted at this point and was reorganized. As it was not every year that a sufficient number of traders could be got together to justify the prosecution of such a hazardous journey, the Indian traders patiently waited till the next batch of their fellow-countrymen arrived from across the mountains. The best and surest goods for the Chinese markets 'were lumps of a certain transparent kind of marble, which we, from poverty of language, usually call jasper'—meaning jade.

About half way between the Karakoram Pass and Yarkund jade is worked with great difficulty out of a quarry. A trench

being excavated on the top of a rock, a fire is lighted, and when the heat is supposed to have penetrated sufficiently deep, a quantity of cold water is suddenly poured into the trench, with the effect of splitting off a considerable slab. The Torkee name for jade, says Colonel Yule, is 'Kash,' but the Chinese call it 'Yu-she, or Yu stone. The best quality is fished up in the form of boulders out of the rivers of Khotan.

According to Lieutenant Hayward, Yarkund now contains about 40,000 houses, but he estimates the population at only 120,000. There are five gates, the main street running from the gate in the western wall to the Aksu gate in the eastern side. The streets are usually narrow, never exceeding ten to twelve feet in width, and are lined with shops kept mostly by women. Some houses possess an upper storey, in which Mr Shaw's quick eye observed mothers rocking cradles with their foot, a novel spectacle in the East. Yarkund boasts of 160 mosques, numerous colleges, and twelve caravanserais, 'which are always crowded with merchants from every country in Asia.' The water for the use of the citizens is brought from the river by canals, and stored in large open reservoirs, or tanks.

About 500 yards to the westward of the city stands the Yang-shuhr, or New Town, a citadel surrounded by walls of earth forty feet high, and twelve feet wide at the top, parallel with the four cardinal points. It is nearly square, measuring about 700 yards each way. Each corner is defended by a bastion and a tower, with eight intermediate flanking defences, and the parapet is loop-holed for musketry. A dry moat encloses the fort, twenty-five feet in depth, eighteen feet wide at the bottom, and thirty at the top. There are three gates, but only one is kept open. In the south-west corner is placed the 'Urdoo,' or residence of the chief authorities, girt with a wall thirty feet high. The north-west corner is occupied by the inner fort, which, at the time of Mr Hayward's visit, was in a very ruinous

condition. No guns were mounted on the walls, but in the street stood five long swivels, two small mortars, and five four-pounders mounted on carriages, with ammunition waggons drawn up in the rear. The gunners were chiefly Hindoostanees, soldiers of fortune, and mutineers from the old Bengal army,—the words of command being given in English.

The temperature of Yarkund varies considerably at different seasons of the year. Early in January Fahrenheit's thermometer sinks nearly to zero in the morning, rising to 23° at noon, but by the end of May it marks 72°, and in July and August from 80° to 85°.

The road from Yarkund to Kashgar passes through the hamlet of Kokrobat, with its 200 houses; skirts the Dusht-i-Hameed, a barren stony plain, exhibiting scanty patches of grass and a few stunted shrubs; traverses the busy townlet of Kizil, consisting of 500 houses, with furnaces for smelting the iron ore procured from the lower slopes of the Kizil-Tagh, or Red Mountains; discovers several smaller villages; crosses another broad sterile plain, and finally reaches Yanghissar on the left bank of the Sargrak. This town contains perhaps 11,000 houses, but the streets are very narrow, and lined with booths succeeding each other in wild confusion, a stall covered with silks standing next to one reeking with horse-flesh. Six hundred yards from the town is a square fort, 250 yards in length and breadth, with bastions, towers, and flanking defences, walls thirty-six feet in height, and a dry moat thirty-six feet in depth. Yanghissar was the first place captured by Yakoob Beg, and was defended by the Chinese with desperate resolution even after every article of food had been consumed; the mere handful that survived submitting to be circumcised.

Picturesque views may be here enjoyed of the Kizil Yart range, rising to peaks 20,000 feet in altitude; with spurs running abruptly into the high table land below. Yanghissar is

about thirty miles north-west of Yarkund, and a little over forty from Kashgar. After leaving this town, Mr Hayward traversed a track of marshy ground before he again found himself in the midst of cultivation. At Yupchan, a townlet of 700 houses, he crossed the Hosun river, and a little further on the Khanarik, with a breadth of 700 yards, between low banks, fringed with grassy strips, covered with a jungle of tamarisk shrubs. The large village of Tasgam next came in view in the heart of a fertile district, and then the Yangi-shuhr, or New Town, of Kashgar. As at Yarkund, this is the citadel, and in 1864-65 was held by the Chinese for eighteen months, until famine compelled them to surrender. The northern and southern walls are about 600 yards in length, but the eastern and western are somewhat less. They are forty feet high, constructed of earth, and pierced for three gates, of which only one is in use. They are surrounded with a dry moat, twenty-five feet deep and forty in width. The interior is divided into three courts, in the innermost of which is the 'Urdoo,' or King's Palace.*

The town itself is situated four miles to the north, on the other side of the Kizil Darya, or Kashgar river. It is commonly called the Old Town, and is encircled with a clay-built wall, penetrated by five gates. Kashgar is a flourishing city, containing perhaps 28,000 houses, and a population estimated by Mr Hayward at over 60,000 souls. 'The power in possession of Kashgar,' that traveller remarks, 'holds the key of Eastern Turkestan from the north. Wonderfully well and centrally situated, it is a place of the utmost importance, both in a political and military point of view. Here all the roads from the Khanates of Central Asia converge, and in the hands of any European Power it would be a place of immense commerce.'

* Mr Shaw, however, is probably more correct in spelling this word as Oorda, evidently derived from the same origin as Oordoo, and corrupted into our English 'horde.'

In Hiouen Tsang's time the people, as compared with the Chinese, appeared to be coarse, unlettered, and immoral. They flattened the heads of their babies, and painted their persons. Their eyes were of a green colour, and their language peculiar, though they wrote in the Indian style. They were Buddhists, and 10,000 monks occupied a hundred convents. The province was for the most part sandy and sparingly cultivated, but in places produced good crops of fruit and grain. The local manufactures were felt, stout cloth, fine carpets, and brocades.

Lieutenant Hayward describes, as follows, his interview with Mohammed Yakoob Beg, the Atalik Ghâzee. 'Passing through the north gate into the fort, a body of Tungani soldiers, armed with long lances, were first noticed, drawn up on each side of the way, while a guard of Turki sipahis, in scarlet uniform and high sheepskin caps, were grouped around some few pieces of artillery in position, near the main entrance. . . Dismounting at the entrance of a large courtyard, I was conducted by the Yuzbashee across this enclosure to the gate of an inner court, where a Yuzawal-bashee, dressed in the costume and chain-armour of the Egyptian Mamelukes, came forward to say that, if I would sit down for a few minutes, the Atalik would be prepared to see me. I accordingly waited until he returned, and ushered me across the second court, which, with the first, was filled with men all dressed in silk, and armed. . .

'Having reached the entrance of the innermost court, I found it to be quite empty, save of a piece of ordnance in position, with muzzle pointed towards the entrance gate. At the further end of this court, sitting under the verandah in front of his apartment, was the Atalik Ghâzee himself, and here, as at Yarkund, no display or decoration appeared in the plain and unadorned buildings of his palace. As if scorning any costliness but that of military display, everything about him is in keeping with his simple and soldier-like habits.

'The Yuzawal-bashee who escorted me retiring, I advanced alone, bowed, and shaking hands, sat down opposite to the Atalik. He was dressed very plainly in a fur-lined silk *choga*, with snow-white turban, and, in the total absence of any ornaments or decorations, presented a striking contrast to the bedecked and bejewelled Rajahs of Hindustan. I was at once favourably impressed by his appearance, which did not belie the deeds of a man who in two years has won a kingdom twice the size of Great Britain.' (Clearly an exaggeration.) 'He is about forty-five years of age, in stature short and robust, with the strongly marked features peculiar to the Uzbegs of Andijan.' (He is said to be of Tajeek extraction.) 'His broad, massive, and deeply-seamed forehead, together with the keen and acute eye of the Asiatic, mark the intelligence and sagacity of the ruler, while the closely-knit brows and firm mouth, with its somewhat thick sensuous lips, stamp him as a man of indomitable will. . . Although an adept in dissimulation and deceit, the prevailing expression of his face was one of concern and anxiety, as if oppressed with constant care in maintaining the high position to which he has attained. His manner, however, was most courteous, and even jovial at times.'

In another place Mr Hayward said of this successful soldier of fortune: 'If the villainy and deceit which he has practised during his career stand in strange contrast with his fortitude and unflinching bravery, he has also fought well, for he has been twelve times wounded. And as an Asiatic will never hesitate to stoop to treachery and deceit, it would be hopeless to look for any trait of generosity and magnanimity displayed by him during his rapid rise to power. He is now proving himself to be an able and energetic statesman, and a fit ruler of the somewhat turbulent subjects whom he has to govern.'

In the north-eastern extremity of Eastern Toorkestan stands the ancient town of Aksu, at the confluence of the Aksu

and Kokshal rivers. According to Colonel Yule it contains 6000 houses, and forms the central point of the Chinese trade, whence diverge routes to China on one side, and to Eastern and Western Toorkestan on the other. The surrounding district is particularly fertile, and produces grapes, melons, cereals, and cotton. Hiouen Tsang speaks favourably of the cotton and wool of Aksu, or, as he calls it, Po-lou-kia, but these advantages were terribly counter-balanced by the fierce dragons that infested the stony desert to the north-west and attacked travellers, who consequently avoided uttering loud cries or wearing red dresses. It certainly lies unpleasantly near the Muz-Art or Icy Mountains, a branch of the Tian Shan, across which passes the road to Kulja, formerly the capital of the Chinese Government of Zungaria and Toorkestan, but now annexed to Russia.

Aksu may have been the Auxacia of Ptolemy, and was certainly the chief seat of an extensive Chinese province under the Han dynasty in the second century B.C. It was, also, at one time the favourite residence of the rulers of Kashgar and Yarkund. Hiouen Tsang crossed the mountains to Issyk-Kul, or Lake Thsung-Tchi, and ascertained that no one dared to fish in its salt, dark-green waters, for fear of the strange monsters that dwelt beneath its stormy surface. Another town of Eastern Toorkestan is Ush Turfan, now an inconsiderable place, but which once possessed a tolerably large population. It is famous for the tobacco grown in the neighbourhood, and a brisk trade in cattle is also carried on. The inhabitants having revolted from the Chinese in 1765 were put to the sword, and 500 families brought in from the neighbouring districts to form the nucleus of a new town.

A far more notable place is Khotan in the south-eastern extremity of Alty-shuhr. It was, says Colonel Yule, the seat of a very ancient civilization, and had friendly relations

with China upwards of a century before the Christian era. In the fourth century it was entirely devoted to Buddhism, and in the time of Hiouen Tsang contained a hundred convents peopled by 5000 monks. According to that pilgrim, the people were of gentle character, orderly in their conduct, polite in their manners, skilful, industrious, and fond of music, song, and the dance. They wrote after the Indian fashion, but spoke in a peculiar dialect. Their ordinary apparel was of white cotton, few making use of either furs or wool. Silkworms were much cultivated, while carpets, felt, and cotton cloths were the chief manufactures. Marco Polo also makes mention of Cotan, a Mohammedan province, eight days' journey in length, containing many towns and castles, with much abundance of all things necessary for life and comfort. The inhabitants—who, it has been suggested, may be descended from the Χάιται Scythians of Ptolemy—were rather given to the pursuit of trade than of arms. The silkworm, it is said, was introduced by a Chinese Princess, who, at a far distant epoch, had married the ruler of Khotan. The original capital was named Ilchi, and it is quite recently that the town of Khotan has obtained any sort of notoriety.

The ill-fated Moorcroft was favourably impressed with the natural capabilities of the province. Yaks, he says, were bred on the mountains, and ordinary cattle in the plains. Sheep of the Dumba stock and shawl-goats increased and multiplied. Among wild animals, the two-humped camel was hunted down both for its flesh and for its wool. The Gorkhar or wild ass, many kinds of deer, including the musk deer, hares, foxes, leopards, bears, wolves, and perhaps tigers, provided profitable sport for hunters. Partridges and the larger francolin were common. The manufactures comprised woollens, camlets, cottons, and silks, and at one time an extensive trade was carried on with Hindostan, but this had fallen off previous to

Moorcroft's wanderings, between 1819 and 1825. The jade manufacture was then in a flourishing condition, and stones free from speck were reserved exclusively for his Celestial Majesty. It was believed that if poison were put into a jade cup the vessel would fly into pieces; that fragments of jade worn upon the person avert the lightning flash; and that any liquor drunk from a jade cup will relieve palpitation of the heart.

In the year 1865 Mr W. H. Johnson, employed in the Indian Trigonometrical Survey Department, finding himself at Leh in Ladakh, was moved by truly British restlessness to make a journey across the mountains to Ilchi. Setting out in the month of July he took the usual route to the Pangong Lake up the Changchenmo valley, and across the Pass. After that he chose the Brinjga route, which traverses extensive plains with an easy slope, but devoid of vegetation except a few lavender plants, and badly supplied with water. At the northern extremity of the plains the route dips suddenly to the Karakash river, where grass and fuel are obtainable in small quantities. It thence leads over the snowy Passes of Brinjga, lofty and difficult through the masses of snow and ice with which they are encumbered. It then turns down a ravine for one whole march, and afterwards crosses several more passes and streams, and finally descends into the plains of Khotan near Bezilia. 'I was informed,' Mr Johnson remarks, 'that by skirting the Kiun Lun range wheeled conveyances might be easily taken from Ilchi to the Changchenmo valley near Leh; that water, grass, and wood are obtainable at every halting-place, and that the only difficulty is the liability to meet with opposition from the shepherds of Rudok in the portion of the route which passes across the Changthang Plain.'

As it was, it took him sixteen days from the valley of the Karakash to Ilchi, by a very difficult road and over a recently

discovered Pass. He goes on to describe the province of Khotan as an extensive plain gently sloping towards the north, and well watered by mountain streams and artificial canals. The soil is generally sandy, free from stones, and highly productive. An exceedingly fine sand, resembling minutely pulverized clay, often falls in showers, when there is not a breath of wind, obscuring the light of day, but fertilizing the land which it covers. Much the same cereals are grown as in India, but of superior quality, owing to the greater equality of the climate. The most common trees are poplars, willows, and tamarisks. The grass is magnificent, and cotton and raw silk are of excellent quality. Minerals abound, such as gold, silver, iron, lead, copper, antimony, salt, saltpetre, sulphur, and soda.

As a manufacturing town Ilchi, or Khotan, ranks next to Yarkund, and turns out silks, felts, carpets of a mixed fabric of silk and wool, coarse cotton cloths, and paper made from mulberry fibre. The population of the capital is estimated at 40,000 and that of the province at 250,000. Females are said to be in excess of males to the extent of twenty per cent., owing to the frequency of wars and rebellions. The men are fair complexioned, well built, and good looking; and the women, though rather short, are pretty, but with a slight touch of the Tatar cast of countenance. Men and women alike were dressed in clean and comfortable attire, and seemed cheerful and prosperous.

The Khan at that time dwelt in an old Chinese fort, built of earth. The town was surrounded by a wall twenty-five feet in height and twenty in breadth. Watchmen patrolled the streets at night, notifying their approach by striking a stick against a hollow piece of wood, which gave forth a loud, unmusical sound. The old Chinese instruments of torture were then in use. One of them was the rack, worked by screws; another, similar to our treadmill; and a third, employed to

extort confession, was a frame covered with sharp stones and gravel, on which the culprit was forced to kneel with a heavy log of wood laid across the inner part of his knee joints, the pain being excruciating. Hanging and blowing away from guns were the ordinary modes of inflicting capital punishment. Gallows were erected, for convenience sake, in various parts of the city. Flogging with a leather thong was also a common method of chastising both men and women.

Mr Johnson was invited to Yarkund to take possession of the town and district in the name of the British Government, and was informed that the inhabitants, weary of anarchy, confusion, and oppression, had clubbed together to present him with £30,000 and sundry robes of honour, if he would consent to remain and be their ruler. The flattering offer was declined, and Mr Johnson returned to his humbler duties as a surveyor, and it is reported received something like a snubbing from the Governor-General for wandering into unknown lands, and incurring the liability of being pelted with provinces and kingdoms.

CHAPTER XV.

THE AMEER OF KASHGAR.

HISTORICAL SKETCH OF ALTYSHUHR—WALEE KHAN TOURA—MOHAMMED YAKOOB BEG—TUNGANI REBELLION—HEROIC SUICIDE OF THE AMBAN—FALL OF KASHGAR—YAKOOB BEG DEFEATS THE TUNGANIS—RECEIVES TITLE OF ATALIK GHAZEE—TREACHEROUS SEIZURE OF KHOTAN—REDUCTION OF TASH KURGHAN—OFFICIAL RELATIONS WITH RUSSIA—MR FORSYTH'S FIRST MISSION—BARON VON KAULBARS' MISSION—EXPORTS AND IMPORTS—PROGRESS OF RUSSIAN INFLUENCE—AGA MEHDIE RAPHAEL—ROUTES TO INDIA—LADAKH—MR FORSYTH'S SECOND MISSION—LORD CLARENDON'S NEUTRAL ZONE.

BUDDHISM was the national faith of Eastern Toorkestan from the commencement of the Christian era to the close of the 14th century. During the 8th century, indeed, a long and terrible war raged between the Arabs and the Chinese, in which the former were victorious, and succeeded in impressing the ritual observances of their faith upon the nomad population. The original inhabitants and the Chinese settlers continued, however, loyal to their ancient creed, and it was not until the reign of Timour that Islam finally superseded belief in the teachings of Sakya-Muni. Under the descendants of Chinghiz Khan, Altyshuhr—comprising the six cities of Yarkund, Kashgar, Ilchi, Aksu, Yanghissar, and Ush-Turfan—formed a portion of the Chagatai Khanat. Religious toleration, or indifference, was one of the characteristic features of the early Tatar domination, and in Marco Polo's time there existed several nunneries belonging to the Nestorian Christians.

About the year 1678, the Khwajas or Khojas of the Black Mountain fell out with the Khojas of the White Mountain, and the latter, being worsted in battle, implored the aid of Galdan Khan, chief of the Eleuths, or Kalmuks, of Zungaria. Assistance was granted. Ismail Khan, ruler of Kashgar, and the Black Mountain Khojas were carried off into captivity, and their country reduced to a state of vassalage to Galdan Khan and his successors. In 1757 the Zungarian empire was overthrown by the Chinese, who also annexed the Land of the Six Cities, and expelled the Khojas of the White Mountain.

In the mountainous regions of Ferghana, or Khokan, these descendants of the Arabian prophet, revered by the people for their sanctity and gift of working miracles, found a secure asylum from further persecution, but, unhappily for themselves, could not rest contented with peaceful obscurity. In 1827, Jehangheer Khan Khoja suddenly made himself master of Kashgar and Yarkund, but was soon driven out again by the Chinese. Fleeing to Khokan, he was surrendered to his pursuers, and executed at Pekin in the following year. The next attempt at recovering their former position was made in 1852 by seven Khojas, but without success.

Five years later, however, the notorious Walee Khan Toura obtained some notable advantages until his own adherents, terrified by his insane cruelty, abandoned him to his fate. This madman was in the habit of daily intoxicating himself with *bhang*, and in his frenzy thought nothing of human life. A Kashgaree armourer one day presented him with a sword wrought by himself with special care. Drawing it from the sheath, Walee Khan with one sweep struck off the head of the armourer's son, a youth standing by his father's side. 'Yes,' he quietly remarked, 'it is a good blade,' and turning to his attendants, he added, 'Give this man a killut,' or robe of honour. At another time he ordered a musician to be beheaded

for yawning in his presence, and scarce a day passed without three or four executions. His chief officers sat before him with downcast eyes, and open hands stretched out as in prayer. If one of them raised his eyes or altered his attitude, the penalty was death. If the Muezzin called to prayers when Walee Khan was going out, he forfeited his head.

While this monster was besieging the Chinese in the fort of Kashgar, the Prussian traveller Adolph von Schlagintweit in an evil hour arrived at his camp. Conducted to the presence of Walee Khan he asked how long the siege had lasted, and was answered 'Three months.' 'Oh!' he imprudently exclaimed, 'my countrymen would take the place in three days. There is no difficulty at all.' 'Indeed,' replied the chief, and in obedience to a sign the indiscreet traveller was led out of the tent to the river-bank, where his throat was cut, and his head finally severed from his body.* Walee Khan ultimately fell into the hands of Yakoob Beg, by whom he was put to death in 1866.

In 1857, Khoda Yar Khan, of Khokan, having given offence to his people, was deposed by his nephew Malla Khan, and fled to Bokhara, where he was well received by the Ameer Nusser Oollah, who gave him his daughter in marriage. Malla Khan was murdered in his bed by five Kirghiz chiefs, in 1860, after which a period of anarchy ensued until a Kipchak chief, named Alam Kool, obtained the ascendancy, which he secured by the decapitation of the five Kirghiz murderers. He then assumed the regency in the name of Malla Khan's son, Sooltan Khan, and for a time Khokan enjoyed the blessings of a vigorous and united government. But in 1865, Alam Kool fell in battle against the Russians, and Mozuffer-ood-deen, now Ameer of

* Captain Valikhanof, who visited Eastern Toorkestan in 1859 in the character of a native trader, alludes to the cruelties practised both by the Kirghiz and Chinese in that country. Schlagintweit's head was exposed to view as the apex of a pyramid of skulls, and the road approaching Kashgar was bordered on each side with small wicker cages containing human heads.

Bokhara, taking advantage of the confusion that prevailed, restored Khoda Yar Khan to the throne. The Kipchaks thereupon fled with the youthful Sooltan Khan to the Kooshbegie, Mohammed Yakoob Beg, who received the little prince with every demonstration of respect.

Yakoob Beg is said to be of Tajeek extraction, and to have been born at Pishpek, now a Russian possession; though Mr Hayward fixes his birth-place at a village near Namangan. His courage and remarkable abilities had raised him from one post to another, until he attained the high office of Kooshbegie, or Commander-in-chief of the Khokan forces, then vainly endeavouring to check the advance of the Russians. In this truly patriotic war Yakoob Beg displayed very considerable military skill, and so fearlessly exposed his own person that he was five times wounded by Russian bullets. His defence of Ak Musjeed was sufficiently obstinate to command the admiration of the enemy, but circumstances connected with the ultimate surrender of that strong place were held to prove that he was not a second Fabricius. When Sooltan Khan fled to him for protection he was serving in Kashgaria as the right arm of Khoja Boozoorg Khan, son of the Jehangheer Khan who was carried to Pekin in a cage and executed in 1828.

Under the Chinese government, Zungaria and Eastern Toorkestan were the northern and southern circuits of a province denominated Ili, and were governed from Kulja. The administration seems to have been of a *quasi*-military character, and has been likened to the system that exists in the Non-Regulation Provinces of India. The Chinese had incorporated large numbers of the Tunganis among their regular troops, and had thus supplied them with arms and discipline, while they themselves were demoralized by excessive indulgence in opium and other drugs. In 1864, the Mohammedan agitation, which had broken out in Salar and Kansu, spread to the province of Ili.

Khamil and Urumchi were the first towns to rise in rebellion. The latter town was the depot for tea for all Central Asia. The Tungani soldiery having compelled their co-religionists, the Sarts, to join them, put the Manchus to the sword, and an extensive conflagration destroyed many warehouses filled with tea.

The insurgents marched thence in two bodies, one to the north, the other to the south. The former met with an uninterrupted series of successes, so that by the autumn of 1865 the Chinese retained only four places in all Zungaria, including the citadels of Kulja and Chuguchak. At this last-named place the Kirghiz declared for the Tunganis, while the Kalmuks espoused the opposite side, and, crossing the Russian frontier, fell upon the Kirghiz encampment, which they plundered for two whole days. The booty they then carried off consisted of 100,000 sheep, 6000 horned cattle, 600 camels, and 1300 horses, while they left amid the ashes of the encampment 300 dead bodies, 200 carcases of slaughtered sheep, and 1500 masterless dogs, which, after devouring corpse and carcase, became desperate and scoured the country in formidable packs. Early in 1866 the Tunganis carried the citadel of Kulja by storm, massacred the garrison, and gained possession of Zungaria north of the Tarbagatai mountains.

In the mean while, the southern wave of rebellion rolled in westward from the desert of Gobi. In the eastern districts the population generally sympathized with the Tunganis, but not so in Altyshuhr. Aksu and Ush-Turfan speedily fell, and no quarter was asked or given. The Mussulman host next elected as their ruler Khoja Rasheed-ood-deen, and then marched against Yarkund. The town at once fell into their hands, but the Chinese retiring into the fort held them at bay for six weeks, by which time everything eatable had been consumed, and death by starvation seemed imminent. The Tungani leader

having offered life and amnesty to all who embraced the true religion—as professed by himself—the venerable Amban or Chinese governor of Altyshuhr, called together his chief officers in an upper room of the palace, and invited them to express their opinions. A violent wrangle ensued, in the midst of which the old man's daughters sat weeping at his feet, while his sons handed round tea and sweetmeats. Suddenly the terrible war shout of the Moslemeen, 'Allah-ho Akbar!' rang in their ears. Addressing a few brief words of farewell to his children, the Amban calmly reversed his long pipe and allowed the hot ashes to fall upon a train, connected with a large quantity of gunpowder placed in the room below. An explosion followed on the instant, and all were blown into the air, a little page-boy alone escaping to tell the heroic tale.

Encouraged by the general confusion, the Kirghiz had swooped down from their mountains like a flock of vultures, but lost their chance of plunder by suffering themselves to be detained for six months before the walls of Kashgar. Ignorant of the art of war, and wholly unprovided with artillery, they could do nothing but cut off all supplies, and trust to famine as their surest auxiliary. And the besieged were reduced to a sorry plight. 'First,' says Mr Shaw, 'they ate their horses, then the dogs and cats, then their leather boots and straps, the saddles of their horses, and the strings of their bows. At last, they would collect together in parties of five or six, who would go prowling about, with ravenous eyes, till they saw some one alone, some unfortunate comrade, who still retained the flesh on his bones. They would drag him aside and kill him, afterwards dividing the flesh betwixt them, each carrying off his piece hidden under his robe. Thirty or forty men died of hunger every day. At last, when no defenders were left on the walls, or at the gateways, the Kirghiz made good their entrance.'

Indescribable barbarities were committed by these savages

until they were surprised and routed by Boozoorg Khan and the Kooshbegie, and their leaders summarily executed. Leaving the main body of his troops to blockade the Chinese garrison in the Yangshuhr, or Fort of Kashgar, Yakoob Beg marched with a small force against the overwhelming host of the Tunganis. The two armies met on the Kanarik near Yupchan, and the battle raged for eight hours. Yakoob Beg had two horses shot under him, and received two severe gun-shot wounds, from which he fainted, but not until the victory had been won by repeated desperate charges. The submission of Yanghissar was the first fruits of this well contested action, which broke the power of the Tunganis. Early in 1865, the Chinese garrison of the Fort of Kashgar surrendered to the Kooshbegie, accepting life at the cost of their religion.

Yakoob Beg was not, however, equally successful at Yarkund. Entering the town with only 500 horsemen, he was surprised to find that the population sided with the Tunganis. The gates being closed upon him, 200 of his little band struck down, and himself wounded, he rode up the city wall and leaped down into the moat, scrambling up the other side. In his daring leap he was followed by the survivors of his party, but he then went to the rear and was the last to leave the moat —a truly valiant barbarian. His second attempt also failed, but at last treachery triumphed, and the Tungani faction was overpowered.

Hitherto Yakoob Beg had fought and bled and conquered as the General of Boozoorg Khan, a feeble old debauchee. He now felt that the time had arrived to throw off the mask and act in his own name. The Khoja was accordingly placed in confinement, but in 1868 was permitted to make a pilgrimage to Mecca, whence he returned in safety by way of Bokhara, and retired to his native hills of Andijan. The execution of the atrocious Khoja Walee Khan must be regarded as almost a

meritorious act, and was necessary to the consolidation of Yakoob Beg's power. The vigour he had displayed in restoring the Land of the Six Cities to Mohammedanism called forth the approbation of the Ameer of Bokhara, who bestowed upon the victorious Champion of the Faith the appropriate title of Atalik Ghâzee, until quite recently the official designation of the present Ruler of Eastern Toorkestan, but who has since received from the Sultan of Turkey the still more distinguished title of Ameer.

The Atalik's next exploit, however, was unutterably foul and treacherous. The venerable Hajee Habiboula Khan, a Chief eighty years of age, had at the commencement of the insurrection expelled the Chinese, and had subsequently routed the Tunganis near Sanju and taken all their guns. This was the Ruler visited by Mr Johnson, the English surveyor, who declined the government of Yarkund. The Atalik Ghâzee proceeded with a small force into the province of Khotan, and encamping near the capital, declared that he asked only for the Hajee's blessing on his expedition against the Tungânis in the north-east. He took even a solemn oath on the Koran to the old Chief's son that he intended no harm to his father. Habiboula upon this proceeded to Yakoob Beg's camp with a mere escort, and was treated with every possible distinction. When about to take his leave, however, he was arrested with all his suite, while the town was at the same time suddenly attacked and taken. Habiboula, his son, nephew, and Wuzeer were carried off to Yarkund and there secretly put to death. 'Their graves,' says Mr Hayward, 'may be seen behind the Tungani Ziarat in the Fort, where the Khotan sepahis, in memory of their old leader, proceed every morning to scatter flowers upon his grave.'

Master of Khotan, the Atalik Ghâzee hastened to the north, and quickly reduced Aksu, Kucha, Ush-Turfan, and Bai Sairam,—the Kalmuks up to the Russian frontier on the Ili

engaging to pay tribute. He then returned to Kashgar for a brief interval of repose, which was soon interrupted by disturbances in the Sarikol district. The chief town in this mountainous region was appropriately named Tash Kurghan, or the Stone Fort, surrounded by a wall built of huge blocks of stone, and a mile-and-a-half in circuit.* On the death of Babash Beg, the local chief, in 1866, his eldest son succeeded to the vacant seat, but was murdered by his brother Alaf, who avowed himself the vassal of the Atalik Ghâzee, for until then, Sarikol seems to have enjoyed a sort of rude independence, owing to its isolated position in the hills and its intrinsic insignificance. After a little time, however, Alaf renounced his allegiance, but was compelled to flee to Badakhshan, while his brother, his wives, and his principal officers were carried off into captivity —his brother being soon afterwards executed. In 1868, the entire population was transported into the plains, and a colony of Kirghiz and Yarkundies sent up to occupy their deserted houses and lands.

The whole of Toorkestan was now subdued, and it seemed that, at last, Yakoob Beg might rest from his labours, and enjoy the fruits of his long toil. Unfortunately for his peace of mind, the politico-geographical position of the kingdom he had so hardly won was in some respects not unlike that of the Low Countries between Austria and France. On the north, the dark chilly shadow of Russia fell upon his dominions, and threatened storm and destruction, while to the south he dreaded the ambition or the jealousy of the British Government in India, lest it should be moved to annex his otherwise worthless possessions to prevent them from falling into the hands of the Russians. The danger from the north was real, imminent, and abiding, while that from the south soon appeared to be specu-

* Hiouen Tsang visited this place in A.D. 645, but calls it Kabanddha, and its foundation is ascribed to the legendary Afrasiab.

lative and prospective. It is not, therefore, a matter for surprise that the Atalik Ghâzee should have shown greater anxiety to cultivate the friendship of his northern than of his southern neighbours.

The designs of Russia upon this country date from the reign of Peter the Great, who despatched an expedition to explore the Irtish, construct a fort on the frontier, and take possession of Yarkund, but the undertaking was premature and came to nothing. Prince Beckovitch had also instructions to enter into direct communications with the Great Moghul and open a trade-route between the Caspian Sea and India, while a branch expedition was to ascend the Jaxartes into Little Bucharia and push on to Yarkund. The fate of the gallant Circassian and his much-enduring troops need not be repeated in this place, but we are assured by the Dutch Orientalist Bentinck that 'if the late Emperor of Russia (Peter I.) had lived yet a little longer, he would have laboured incessantly to establish a regular commerce between his States and the city of Jerkeen, by the river Irtis, which would have had very advantageous consequences for the subjects of Russia.' A hundred and fifty years later, the grand projects of the founder of the Muscovite Empire approached their realization. A fort has been erected on the banks of the Naryn only six days from the city of Kashgar, and it is stated that both the Terek and the Kashgar-Davan Passes have been made practicable for wheeled conveyances, and therefore for artillery.

The first official communications between the Atalik Ghâzee and the Russians took place in 1868, for previously to that time the latter affected to regard the people of Eastern Toorkestan as rebels to their ally the Emperor of China, and Yakoob Beg as a mere adventurer and soldier of fortune. But in political ethics success justifies all means, and accordingly in that year, Captain Reinthal, aide-de-camp to his Excellency the Governor-

General of Russian Toorkestan, was sent from Tashkend on a complimentary mission to Kashgar—possibly, to 'search out all the country.' On his return to Tashkend, Captain Reinthal was accompanied by Meerza Shadee, who went on to St Petersburg, where he was received with much distinction.

The Russian mission may perhaps have been hastened by the steps taken by the Atalik Ghâzee to increase the natural difficulties of access into his dominions from the north. Not satisfied with building a fort in the mountains above Artush, three days' march from Kashgar, he is said to have closed up several Passes, and generally to have exhibited symptoms of distrust as to the intentions of his neighbour. Beyond this, he had twice sent envoys to the Indian Government, but the policy of a 'masterly inactivity'—or rather of a timid waiting upon Providence—blinded the eyes and paralysed the arm of the Viceroy, and Yakoob Beg, still apprehensive of the Chinese and by no means certain of the loyalty of his own subjects, had no alternative, but to throw himself into the arms of Russia.

It is true that in 1870, Mr Douglas Forsyth, a distinguished member of the Bengal Civil Service, was sent on a mission to Kashgar, but with instructions to return within so brief a period that he failed to have any interview whatever with the ruler of the country, at that time engaged in suppressing a formidable insurrection of the Tunganis in Ush-Turfan and Kucha. Mr Forsyth, therefore, returned to India without accomplishing the object he had in view,—though, personally, he appears to have done all that any man could do to counteract the mischief embodied in his feeble, short-sighted instructions. The Atalik Ghâzee was meanwhile successful in his efforts to crush the rebels, and was careful, at the same time, to strengthen the defences of the Aksu and Muzart Passes.

The Russians, however, watched his progress with a jealous eye, and in April, 1871, seized upon the town of Kulja, though

situated in Chinese territory. In May of the following year, Baron Von Kaulbars arrived in Kashgar, to arrange the preliminaries of a Treaty of Commerce. The Baron had certainly no reason to complain of his reception, the Atalik Ghâzee exclaiming with genuine Oriental exaggeration, 'Sit down wherever you please, upon my knees, upon my bosom. You are guests sent by Allah.' A military review of 3000 Chinese and Tungani soldiers, supported by a battery of artillery, must have appeared to the Russians in much the same light as the famous review in Windsor Park to the military suite of Napoleon III., at the time of that Emperor's visit to England, in the early days of the Crimean War. After this display of his weakness, Yakoob Beg said to the Envoy: 'I reckon upon you as upon my intimate friends, and it is for this reason I have shown you my soldiers. Had I thought that you were to become my enemies, I certainly would not have done so.' He also frankly remarked to the Baron that, 'It is not in the Russian to live at peace with his neighbour. He may do so for a year or two, but that is the utmost. After that he is sure to make war, and conquer as much as he can.' Nevertheless, or perhaps to lengthen the temporary lull as far as possible, he affixed his signature to the commercial treaty, and sent Meerza Mah-ood-deen Maasoum to Tashkend, in company with the Russian Mission. 'To secure the friendship of a neighbouring State without bloodshed,' said General Kaufmann to the Meerza, 'I consider to be a blessing from God,' and he advised the Envoy to visit all the establishments in Tashkend that are not yet to be found in Kashgar, 'but which in time will doubtless be introduced there'—a phrase of ambiguous meaning.

The Russian idea of treaties with Asiatic States has been explained by Baron Von Kaulbars in a letter to the St Petersburg *Vedomosté*, after a fashion little calculated to remove the suspicions or allay the anxiety of the Atalik Ghâzee. 'Speak-

ing of Treaties,' says the Baron, 'I ought to observe that in Central Asia such like instruments have not the meaning accorded to them in Europe. They are no more than a *point d'appui* which may be used for the gradual development of amicable relations, but ought not to be carried out too promptly, unless we wish to push the natives to resistance. Concluded only to obtain a cessation of hostility, they are at first carried out very unwillingly, until the natives perceive that the maintenance of peace is really the one thing we have at heart. Only after some time do they realize the truth that peace and commerce are profitable to both sides, and condescend to hold friendly intercourse and to profit by the rights accorded them. The conclusion of Commercial Treaties, therefore, is by no means the only thing required in Central Asia; it must be succeeded by a discreet use of the privileges obtained, if our conciliatory mission is to be fulfilled at all. In fact, there is nothing permanent on earth. In Europe as in Asia Treaties have been broken before now, and may be broken in the future. If the time should ever come when we shall be compelled to conquer this or that country in Central Asia with which we have previously entered into Treaty stipulations, we shall be able to console ourselves with the reflection that we shall find the soil prepared to receive the seed of our influence and culture. Nor will it be disadvantageous to us in such a case to find a good many acquaintances in the new country, whom we came to know through the relations established under these Treaties.'

The exports to India consist of felt cloths, silk, bhang, pushmeena wool, gold, silver, and cotton; while the imports include opium, spices, sugar, tea, linen cloths, kinkâb, English broadcloth, muslins, Kashmeer shawls, fire-arms, leather, utensils of brass, and indigo. From Khokan are received Russian prints and calicoes, silk, iron, silk caps, cochineal, porcelain,

Russian knives and padlocks, Russian broadcloths, tobacco, snuff, &c. A profitable trade in tea might doubtless be carried on between Altyshuhr and Upper India. Though it is used in immense quantities, the price in Kashgar at the time of Mr Shaw's adventurous journey was ten shillings for a packet holding a pound and a quarter. The tea sent from China into Central Asia, is described by Moorcroft as being compressed into blocks of about 8 lbs. each. The leaves are firmly pressed together while moist, and each lump is covered with coarse yellow paper stamped with a seal impressed with Chinese characters. They are next wrapped in grass, and in that state conveyed to Lhassa, where they are packed in undressed yak-skin, the hairy side inwards, the joinings being neatly secured by a sewing of fine thongs, or laces. Green tea in lumps was then sold at Ladakh, at the rate of three rupees per seer, or three shillings per pound, and black tea at rather less than two shillings a pound—the retail prices being double these rates.

The trade between Eastern Toorkestan and Hindostan is said to have increased sevenfold between 1867 and 1871. In the former year a British Commissioner was appointed to reside at Leh in Ladakh for a certain portion of each year, to facilitate commercial intercourse between India and Central Asia, and in 1870 the Maharajah of Kashmeer was induced to abolish transit duties on merchandise passing through his dominions. Still it cannot be denied that the present value of this trade is quite insignificant, if measured by the standard of mutual commerce between any two European countries. Besides, it is as yet in the hands of native traders, and much resembles the itinerant semi-retail mode of traffic that prevailed in Europe during the middle ages. Neither the manufacturers nor the merchants of England are likely to take much personal interest in an exchange of commodities conveyed for many hundred miles over pathless mountains on the backs of small ponies and smaller

cows. A business of this kind is evidently more suited to the semi-Asiatic, pedlar-like genius of the Russians, and it may be safely predicated that by far the larger share of the trade of Central Asia will ultimately fall into their hands. Indeed, they have already secured a monopoly wherever their power has been established. The Caspian Sea they have long since made a *Mare clausum*, contrary to the spirit of international comity, which requires that every navigable sea, and strait, and river should be open to the flags and commercial enterprise of all nations. One might, perhaps, go further and insist that true international comity demands the abolition of all restrictions upon trade, of all export and import duties, and that the interchange of produce and manufactures should be free and unfettered over the whole earth.

Awaiting that commercial millennium, it cannot be unpatriotic to express a regret that Russia should thus become dominant over two-thirds of the continent of Asia, and be enabled to bring an irresistible influence to bear likewise upon the Chinese Empire. Half a century ago Moorcroft indignantly asked if Ladakh, Tibet, and Lhassa were to derive their supplies of hardware and woollens from England or from Russia, and answered his own question by the admission that there could be little doubt 'to which the prize will be awarded, for enterprise and vigour mark the measures of Russia towards the nations of Central Asia, whilst ours are characterized by misplaced squeamishness and unnecessary timidity.' He gives also a curious illustration of the mode of operation pursued by the Russian Government to obtain accurate information as to the capabilities of neighbouring states, at the same time conveying exalted notions of the power of Russia, and holding out promises and expectations which could at any time be repudiated by simply disavowing the agent.

Aga Mehdi Raphael, son of a Persian Jew settled in Kash-

meer, was at an early age left an orphan, and to obtain a livelihood served in a menial capacity. Having saved a little money, he started as a pedlar and found his way into Russia, where he developed into a shawl-merchant. Up to that time he had professed Islam according to the doctrines of the Sheeahs, but he now proclaimed himself a Christian, and was presented to the Tzar, who granted him a sort of roving commission, and employed him as an agent to 'extend the influence of Russia to the confines of British India, as well as to acquire information regarding the geographical and political circumstances of the intervening countries.' He appears to have given satisfaction, for on his return from a lengthened tour he received from the Emperor, Alexander I., a gold chain and a medal, and was again sent forth like the raven from the Ark. Among his credentials were a letter from Count Nesselrode to Runjeet Singh, commending to his notice the 'merchant and aulic councellor,' as a respectable person anxious to do business. A similar letter was sent to the ruler of Ladakh. One whole year of his adventurous career was passed by Aga Mehdi in the service of an English dyer, settled in Russia, and he died at last quite suddenly while crossing the Karakoram mountains.

His partner, Mohammed Zahoor, however, reached Leh with a small kafilah of cochineal, indigo, woad, &c., &c., to be used in Kashmeer in dying shawl goods, 'according to specimens of colour on flannel furnished by a British artist at St Petersburg.' Besides these dyes, he had a collection of rubies and emeralds far too costly for the Tibet and Lahore markets, 'and it seemed probable that they were designed for presents rather than for sale.' His stock of miscellaneous articles further consisted of Russian telescopes, English cutlery, phosphorus boxes, &c., &c., and a considerable sum in money. It was reported at Yarkund that the Aga assured the Mohammedans that they might rely upon the aid of Russia in throwing off the Chinese yoke, and

that he had invited the rightful heir to the throne to St Petersburg, promising to send him back with an army to effect his restoration to the throne of his ancestors. It was also said that Runjeet was to be asked to send envoys to St Petersburg, whose charges should be defrayed by the Russian government. At Yarkund this clever emissary professed Mohammedanism after the Soonee fashion.

According to Lieutenant Hayward, the most direct route from India to Eastern Toorkestan lies across the Chang Lang Pass, 18,839 feet above the sea, and keeping to the westward of the Lingzie Thung plains, traverses the upper valley of the Karakash river, crosses the Karatagh Pass, at an elevation of 17,953 feet, and so reaches the Ak-tagh, or White Mountains. The track pursued by caravans from this point to the Karakoram Pass is strewed with the skeletons of horses and other animals, a spectacle that drew from the English traveller the obvious remark that 'the great commercial enterprise of the Toorkestan traders is fully evinced by their efforts to carry their merchandise hundreds of miles over what would be thought in Europe such impracticable mountains. Their losses in horses must be considerable, for a caravan during its journey from Yarkund to Leh, and back to Toorkestan, generally loses a third at least of its horses.'

From the Ak-tagh the route descends the valley of the Yarkund river, crosses the Kuen Lun range by the Yangi Pass, and, winding down into the plains at Kugiar, proceeds to Karghalik and Yarkund. From the Chang-Chenmo Pass to Koolunooldee in the Yarkund valley there would be little difficulty in making a road practicable for two-wheeled conveyances, and in the upper Karakash valley there is a fair supply of both grass and fuel. 'An army,' Mr Hayward remarks, 'attempting a passage across the mountains from Eastern Toorkestan to India would have no great impediment

to encounter until they had entered the deeper defiles of the lower Himalayas. The portion of the line intervening between the crest of the Karakoram range and the plains of Toorkestan is quite practicable, and, as in all human probability it is here that the Russian and Indian empires will first come into contact, and the frontiers run conterminous, this fact is deserving of especial consideration.'

Moonshee Mohammed-i-Hameed, commonly called Major Montgomerie's Meerza, started from Leh on the 24th August, 1868, and took what is known as the summer route to Yarkund. Panamick, seven days' journey from Leh, being the last point where good grass was obtainable, he halted there two days preparatory to undertaking the nineteen days march that lay between him and Kilian, the first village in Eastern Toorkestan. His road traversed lofty desolate mountains, and for twelve days not a blade of grass was visible. On the 20th September he emerged into the plains, and reached Yarkund on the 30th, though five days is the time usually occupied between that city and Kilian. Starting from any place in the Punjab at the foot of the Himalayas, a traveller on horseback will take sixty-six days in crossing over into Central Asia, of which twenty-five will be passed at an elevation never lower than 15,000 feet, and for forty-five days above 9000.

The mountain range between Little Tibet and Eastern Toorkestan is not less than 450 miles in length, and varies in height from 20,000 to over 28,000 feet. Some faint idea of the stupendous character of the volcanic agency that upheaved this tremendous barrier may be afforded by the fact that the base of the Himalayas is nowhere less than 400 miles in breadth from north to south. It is as if all England and Scotland between London and Edinburgh were suddenly broken up, and raised in precipitous masses, to a height of which the lowest indentation, or valley, should be on a level with the summit of Mont Blanc.

The route recommended by Mr Johnson starts from the Punjab to the Hindostan and Tibet road to the Chinese frontier, crosses the Chumourti plains to the Indus, whence it proceeds to Rudok, and thence by the Changthang Pass to Polou, five marches to the south-east of Ilchi, or Khotan. This is a circuitous way, but possesses the advantages of grass, water, and fuel, and avoids the most rugged passes. Wheeled conveyances, Mr Johnson asserts, may be driven from the Changchenmo valley viâ Rudok to Ilchi and Yarkund. He further pronounces the route across the Karakoram Pass to be good so far as the mere road is concerned, but it is destitute of water and grass, and in winter the cold is so intense that men and laden animals have been frozen to death on the lofty plateau between the Niobra and the Karakash rivers.

Lieutenant Hayward was informed by an Afghan trader that the best route was by the Chitral valley, but that it would be unsafe for an English traveller. One of the highest living authorities, however, is undoubtedly Mr Robert Shaw, formerly a tea-planter in the Kangra valley, subsequently British Commissioner at Leh in Ladakh, and now British Resident at the Court of the Ameer of Kashgaria. The Ladakh district is formed by the widening of the valley of the Upper Indus, and lies midway between the 'ten long mountain ridges, more or less parallel, which divide India from Turkestan'—having five of these ridges on each side. To the east and south-east lie the districts of Rudok and Chumourti; to the south, Lahoul and Spiti; to the west Kashmeer and Baltistan, the former separated from it by the Western Himalaya, the latter by an imaginary line drawn from the mouth of the Dras to the sources of the Niobra. Its greatest length from N.W. to S.E. is 240 miles, and its greatest breadth 290, but its mean length is about 200, and its mean breadth 150 miles, containing a superficial area of 30,000 square miles.

Ladakh, says General Cunningham, is called by the Tibetans La-tags, and also Mar-yul, or the Red or Low Land, and sometimes Kha-chan-pa, or Snow Land. It was formerly subject to Lhassa, but in 1834 it was seized by Golab Sing, and is now a province of Kashmeer. The people are Buddhists, and speak of themselves as the Bot-pa. The Ladakh valley is the central and most populous portion of the district. It is 120 miles long and 33 in width, comprising an area of 4000 square miles, with a mean elevation of 11,500 feet, though the town of Leh is placed by Hayward at 11,740 feet above the sea.

From India Leh is reached by 'following up the two easiest of the five rivers of the Punjab to their sources. Travellers from the southern part of the Punjab take the route by the Beâs river, which leads through the beautiful valley of Kullu; while the more northerly route follows the Jhelam river into the equally beautiful and more celebrated Vale of Cashmir. From these valleys respectively, each route crosses over the watershed into the drainage of the Upper Indus, a region distinguished by aridity and high elevation, and forming part of the vast plateau of Tibet. They thus arrive finally at the great depression of the Upper Indus called Ladâk.'

'Thence,' continues Mr Shaw,* 'there is a choice of two routes again, and a very few words will suffice to show their relative merits. Beyond Ladâk the lofty mountain ranges are drained by rivers running in a general direction of N.W. The direct road to Turkistan, which is the old one, strikes boldly across all the difficulties of this district, climbing up to the ridges, and plunging into the gorges, going at right angles to their general direction, and finally crossing into the Central Asian basin, over the high lip or edge called the Karakoram Pass, where for five days, at an elevation averaging 17,000 or 18,000 feet above the sea, no fodder can be found for the bag-

* *Ocean Highways*, August, 1872.

gage animals. With the view of avoiding these difficulties, other routes have been sought out. It has been found that by going round a little to the east, the heads of all these rivers can be turned, and the traveller can pass round them in a high country, where the ranges have sunk down, and the valleys have been exalted so as to form a comparatively level tract with but few formidable irregularities. This region, moreover, possesses the advantage of supplying grass for the horses at almost every stage, so that there is only one day in which the animals are entirely dependent on the grain carried with them.'

It is not, however, from this quarter that any danger to the security of the British rule in India can be seriously apprehended. Under certain conceivable circumstances some mischief might possibly be wrought by the intrigues of secret emissaries instructed *spargere voces in vulgum ambiguas*, but for such purpose it is by no means necessary that Russia should possess a dominant influence in Eastern Toorkestan. Malicious rumours may be originated at any point beyond as well as within her territories, but it is scarcely possible that an invading army will ever be hurled against India, even through the comparatively practicable valleys between the Karakoram and Kuen Lun ranges. Neither can it be pretended that the money value of the trade that under the most favourable contingencies is ever likely to be carried on between British India and Central Asia is worthy of much consideration on the part of the British Government, or deserving of any very vigorous exhibition of diplomacy. As a general rule, trade may be safely trusted to find its own level, and no amount of lectures or leading articles will induce the people of Eastern Toorkestan to lean to Anglo-Indian rather than to Russian traders, unless they find it to be to their positive advantage to do so, through the inferior price or superior quality of the goods offered in barter for their own raw materials or textile fabrics. It is

idle, therefore, to attach any extraordinary importance to the coquetting missions that have been lately interchanged between the Atalik Ghâzee and the Viceroy of India. Friendly and neighbourly relations are always worth cultivating, and in that sense it is satisfactory to know that the visit paid to Calcutta in March, 1873, by Yakoob Beg's nephew and heir-apparent, has been returned in a becoming style by Mr—now Sir—Douglas Forsyth, as the representative of the Indian Government. As a matter of international courtesy the proceeding was quite proper and even commendable, but it certainly does not merit the tone of importance in which it has been mentioned in the public prints.

At the same time the British Government would have manifested culpable apathy, or irresolution, had it failed to take official notice of the rapid advance of the Russian forces into Central Asia, and so far back as the spring of 1869 Lord Clarendon 'earnestly recommended the recognitio n of some territory as neutral between the possessions of England and Russia, which should be the limit of those possessions, and be scrupulously respected by both Powers.' The suggestion was received in a friendly spirit by the Government of St Petersburg, but four years of protracted negotiation elapsed before a definite arrangement could be devised equally acceptable to both parties. The original idea of a neutral zone was, however, abandoned as practically impossible, or at least as ill calculated to attain the object proposed by Lord Clarendon, and in the end it was mutually agreed that the line of demarcation between the direct 'influences' of the two Governments should be coincident with the northern boundary of the territories of the Ameer of Kabul. The misunderstanding that threatened to arise with respect to the exact definition of this frontier was removed by the prompt and courteous adoption by the Russian Government of the views enunciated by the British Cabinet.

It was, therefore, finally decided that the Ameer Shere Ali should be considered the sovereign ruler of Badakhshan, with its dependent district of Wakhan, from the Sir-i-kul on the east, to the junction of the Kokcha with the Oxus or Panja; and also of Afghan Toorkestan from that point on the Oxus to the post of Khoja Saleh, inclusive, embracing the districts of Kunduz, Khulm, and Balkh, and extending in a westerly direction to Andkhui—the desert beyond being given up to the Toorkomans.

It is true that the petty States comprised within this boundary enjoyed a rude sort of independence until they were annexed to Afghanistan by Dost Mohammed in 1850, but it appears from Mountstuart Elphinstone's 'Account of the Kingdom of Caubul'—published in 1814—that the Afghan dominions reached to the Oxus at a much earlier period. 'The only actual possession of the Afghauns in Toorkestaun,' he says, 'is the district immediately around Balkh; but the possessor of that city has always been considered as the rightful master of its dependencies, which include the track having the Oxus on the north, the mountains of Hindoo Coosh and Paropamisus on the south, Budukhshaun on the east, and (generally speaking) the desert on the west. The extent of this tract may be near 250 miles in length (from east to west), and from 100 to 120 miles in breadth (from north to south).'

In his account of Central Asian discoveries published in the Royal Geographical Society's 'Proceedings,' Mr Shaw remarks:—

'In a letter to our late President, Sir Roderick Murchison, I described my astonishment in walking across an open plain from waters which run towards Central Asia to others which flow into the Indus; while the mighty mountain range, topped with glaciers and perpetual snow, which for days before I reached it had seemed to bar all access to the southern regions, was found, on a nearer approach, to be riddled through and through by the streams which rise in the northern plateaux. More recently a striking proof of the same fact reached me. Last year I had recommended certain shooting grounds

north of the Karakorum to some officers of the 37th Regiment in search of sport. Captain Skinner and his companions, finding themselves on the Upper Karakash River, and their time being scanty, thought to return by a short cut to the Indus, leaving the Karakorum Pass to the west of them. On arriving at Leh their first inquiry of me was, "What has become of the Karakorum Range? Has it vanished?" "In fact, they had been tempted to follow a broad opening southward from the Karakash River, expecting always to cross the lofty range marked on the maps; but, after traversing several high barren plains, had found themselves on the banks of a stream running into the Indus, without having crossed any range at all. Having thus abolished the Karakorum Chain, we may, I think, proceed to do the same with several others, and notably with Humboldt's Bolor or Belut Tagh. The explorations of the Russians from Khokand and Samarcand, and of Major Montgomerie's men from the Upper Oxus, seem to show that the highlands of the Pamir, Alai, &c., participate in the character of the country I have just described. High snowy ranges there are, but they do not determine the main flow of the rivers; on the contrary, the crossing from one great river system to the other is generally over an almost insensible rise. The same might be gathered from a statement of a Kashmiri prisoner, whom we met with in Kashgar. He had been captured in one of the wild valleys south of the watershed (near that where the unfortunate Hayward was afterwards murdered). In accordance with the customs of that region he had been sold as a slave. Wounded, barefooted, almost naked, he had been tied to the tail of his master's horse and led, with other slaves, across into Central Asia. In such a plight he would probably have magnified fourfold any difficulties of the road; but he could not, when asked, remember having crossed any mountain pass on the journey, and only after repeated inquiry recollected a certain spot were the waters had been shed into opposite directions.'

CHAPTER XVI.

BADAKHSHAN.

BADAKHSHAN—HISTORICAL SKETCH—INHABITANTS—HINDOO KOOSH—THE HAZAREHS—SYKAN—SLAVES—AIBEK—KHULM, OR TASHKURGHAN—MAZAR—BALKH—KUNDUZ—OOZBEGS—KHANA-A-ABAD—TALIKHAN—FYZABAD—JERM—MANNERS AND CUSTOMS—WAKHAN—KOOROOT—ISHKASHM—KUNDUT—KIRGHIZ ENCAMPMENT.

BADAKHSHAN, the Bactria of classical writers, shared the vicissitudes of its more powerful neighbours, from the overthrow of the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom down to comparatively recent times. The royal family claimed to be descended from Alexander the Great until the middle of the fifteenth century, when the male line expired in Shah Sholtan Mohammed. During Baber's early struggles the whole of Tokhara was in the hands of a Kipchak Toork, named Khosroo Shah, and the country was overrun by Toorks, Moghuls, and vagabonds descended from the hordes of Chinghiz and Timour. When Baber was firmly seated on the throne of Delhi, he bestowed the province of Badakhshan upon his son Hoomayoon, who governed it for eight or nine years until his accession to the Imperial power. From that time it remained practically independent till Shah Jehan, in the middle of the seventeenth century, deputed his sons Moorad and Aurungzeb to re-establish the imperial authority in that remote province. On the reduction of Balkh and the adjacent territory, Shah Jehan appointed as Governor the previous ruler Nazar Mohammed, whose posterity continued undisturbed for a hundred years, when they

were succeeded by the dynasty that, a century later, succumbed to the arms of Dost Mohammed.

In 1759 the Chinese pursued two of the Khoja family they had expelled from Kashgaria into Badakhshan, one of whom shortly afterwards died of the wounds he had received. The other, in defiance of all laws of hospitality, was arrested, condemned to death, and executed, to gratify the hatred of the Chinese. The Khoja, being also a Syud, cursed the country that permitted the perpetration of such a sacrilege as the murder of a descendant of the Prophet, and prayed that it might be thrice depopulated. The uncharitable wish was gratified. First, in 1765 Shah Walee Khan, Wuzeer of Ahmed Shah Abdali of Kabul, ravaged the province, put to death the treacherous Sooltan Shah, and—worse than all—carried off Mohammed's shirt, a relic not less authentic than St Veronica's handkerchief. Again, in the commencement of the present century Kokan Beg, Chief of the Kataghan Oozbegs of Kunduz, swept through the land with fire and sword. And for the third time, in 1829, when Kokan's son Moorad carried off thousands into hopeless captivity, or planted them in the pestilential swamps of Kunduz.

On Moorad's death his power passed to Mohammed Walee Khan, Ameer of Khulm, but in 1850 the Afghans recovered Balkh, and Kunduz nine years later, when Meer Jehandar Shah was reinstated in the government of his ancestors, with Fyzabad for his capital. This arrangement, however, was not destined to remain long in force, for in 1867 the province of Badakhshan was committed to the stewardship of Meer Mahmood Shah, who was lately driven out by the people, but restored by Ameer Shere Ali, to whom he pays an annual tribute of 50,000 rupees, or £5000.

The Badakhshees, as the people of Badakhshan are called, are descendants—according to Dr Wolff—of the captive tribes

of Dan, Naphthali, Zabulon, and Asser. They are described by Hiouen Tsang as a hard and violent race, without religion, without letters, and of a mean aspect. The country he calls Po-to-tch'oang, and speaks favourably of its productive powers, notwithstanding the coldness of the climate, which necessitated the use of woollen garments. In the eyes of Marco Polo, Badakhshan was a very great kingdom, producing lapis lazuli, *balas* rubies—whence it was sometimes named Balakh-khan, or Ruby Land—and silver ore. The horses, he adds, were wonderfully swift, and though unshod traversed the mountains with ease and safety. This statement is in some degree confirmed by Captain Wood, except that he represents them as being shod on the fore feet with circular shoes. They are small, hardy animals, and always go at a gallop over the most rugged and difficult country.

At the present day the population is almost exclusively Tajeek, a quiet, hospitable people, speaking Persian, much given to trade, and professing the doctrines of the Sheeahs. A local tradition traces their origin to the neighbourhood of Baghdad, and they themselves pretend that their name is derived from the Arabic word Tadj, an ornament for the head which the founder of their race stole from Mohammed. It is probable, however, that they come direct from the original inhabitants of the country.

Sir Alexander Burnes was charmed with the romantic beauty of the scenery, and speaks like a 'kindly Scot' of its mountain streams, leaping down from the highlands and fertilizing the plains. The fruits, the flowers, and the nightingales, likewise drew forth expressions of delight. It is true that he had just emerged from the bleak gorges of the Hindoo Koosh, and was prepared to welcome the change from barren cliffs and gloomy precipices to the pleasant champaign country that lay spread out before him.

Strictly speaking, Hindoo Koosh is the name only of the highest snowy peak, but it has long since been applied to the chain which begins in Kashmeer to the westward of the Indus and extends 440 geographical miles to the westward, winding between 34° 30′ and 35° N. The highest point is a little to the east of Bamian, after which the range gradually decreases in altitude. It was called by the Arab geographers 'the Stony Girdle of the Earth,' and by their predecessors, the historians of Alexander's campaigns, was regarded as a continuation of the Western Caucasus. The Koh-i-Baba peak is said to attain an altitude of 18,000 feet, but there are seven Passes, of which the highest, Hajeekak, does not exceed 13,000 feet above the sea, or 7000 above the city of Kabul. Between Kabul and Bamian three considerable ridges have to be traversed, and the same number between Bamian and Khulm.

The spurs and valleys between the Afghan capital and Herat are peopled by Eimaks and Hazarehs, the latter a Tatar race resembling the Kirghiz of the Pameer. Their numbers were vaguely estimated by Captain Wood at 156,000, and at that time—1836—they were subject to Kunduz, to whose ruler they paid a small tribute in slaves. They barter carpets, felt, strong brown *chogas*, and *ghee*, or clarified butter, in exchange for white and coloured coarse cotton cloths, Peshawur loongees, &c.; their possessions consisting chiefly of fine flocks of sheep of the Dhumba breed, and small, hardy horses. Lead and sulphur are found in large quantities. The women go about unveiled, and are delicate-looking for mountaineers. The men, therefore, do most of the out-of-door work, which for seven months in the twelve is confined to gathering fuel. The houses are flat-roofed, and built of stone, and are divided into several rooms—men and women sleeping apart.

The Hazarehs belong to the Sheeah sect, and one tribe, the Jakoorie, 'on hospitable thoughts intent,' tender their wives to

their guests. Rigid morality, indeed, does not appear to characterize the social habits of the Sheeahs. In the holy city of Meshed, 'une nombreuse population,' M. Khanikof cynically remarks, 'de femmes jeunes et belles, qui d'après les règles accommodantes du rite chiite ne démandent pas mieux que de conclure des mariages parfaitement légitimes pour un mois, pour quelques sémaines, et même pour vingt-quatre heures, présente au pélérin Musulman un moyen facile d'oublier qu'il est loin du foyer domestique.'

In the region of perpetual snow is found a caterpillar resembling a silk-worm, which dies if removed to a more genial temperature. Birds often perish in attempting to fly across, or when driven before the wind. Travellers, too, suffer much from giddiness and retching, and usually provide themselves with lumps of sugar and mulberries to relieve respiration.

> But as a troop of pedlars from Cabool,
> Cross underneath the Indian Caucasus,
> That vast sky-neighbouring mountain of milk snow;
> Winding so high that, as they mount, they pass
> Long flocks of travelling birds dead on the snow,
> Choked by the air, and scarce can they themselves
> Slake their parch'd throats with sugar'd mulberries—
> In single file they move, and stop the breath,
> For fear they should dislodge the o'er-hanging snows.

As soon as the snow melts in the valleys the ploughshare is driven into the ground. The seed is sown early in June, and the crops garnered before the end of September. No trees are to be seen on the hill-sides, and the only fuel obtainable is furnished by a stunted furze with thorns like hedgehog quills. Assafœtida thrives luxuriantly at an altitude of 7000 feet, and grows to the height of eight to ten feet. It is an annual, and is eaten eagerly by both men and beasts. The milk as it exudes from the stalk is perfectly white, but soon turns yellow. When it has hardened it is put into bags made of hair. A good-sized

plant will yield ½ lb. of dried juice. Aromatic plants also abound. In the valleys fruit trees are cultivated without difficulty, the apricot being met with in sheltered nooks at a very high elevation.

The road often winds through tortuous defiles, and at the foot of wall-like cliffs from two to three thousand feet in height, which frequently approach on either side so close that the sun is excluded at noon-day, and the polar star becomes visible. At the same time it must not be forgotten that during the Afghan war a battery of the Bengal Horse Artillery crossed the Bamian Pass, 12,000 feet above the sea, nor can it be doubted that a considerable force might be transported from one side to the other should the easier route by Herat be judged unadvisable. Beyond Bamian, travellers have to cross the Akrobat—or White Caravanserai—Pass, 10,200 feet above the sea level, whence they descend to the village of Sykan in the Kunduz district. The dreariness of the surrounding mountains is relieved by the fresh verdure and fruitful gardens of this valley, which being now happily subject to Kabul, pays its annual tribute in horses, and not in human beings, as when it was held by the Oozbeg chief of Kunduz.

Captain Wood beheld 'the tribute' on its way to that town. 'The able-bodied slaves were chained together; the aged, who were too infirm to walk, rode on donkeys, and behind them were bound children, whose extreme youth rendered them happily unconscious of the home they had left, and the liberty they had lost. They all of them were squalid and dirty, and the ragged pieces of clothing that hung from their shoulders were but a poor substitute for covering. One haggard old woman, on whose lineaments Time had traced many a wrinkle, presented an appearance scarcely human; she was a humiliating sight.'

At Sykan the road again ascends to the Dundan-Shikan or

Tooth-Breaker Pass, so called from its extreme ruggedness and steepness. It thence descends into a narrow valley lined with orchards of apricot trees, and then passes between cliffs 3000 feet in height, and not 300 yards apart. Beyond this is the Kara Kotal, or Black Pass, the last on this route though still ninety-five miles from the plains, and after a while the village of Dooab is reached in the bed of the river of Khulm, between precipices that appeared to Sir Alexander Burnes as 'terrific.' The banks of the river, however, are overgrown with rank hemlock, peppermint, bramble, sweet-briar, and hawthorn, and other 'homely' shrubs and plants. A further descent between 'tremendous defiles,' with hawks and eagles circling overhead, leads through the Khurm valley to Aibek or Heibuk.

The poisonous arum is here common as a weed; vast flocks browse on aromatic pastures; herds of deer bound along the rocks overhead; wild hogs haunt the reeds and jungle; while the heart of the valley is a vast orchard of fruit-frees. Aibek itself is a flourishing village, famous for its dried apricots. It is the ancient Samangan, the birth-place of Roostam, and the residence of the father of Rudaba, his wife. A conical rock-cell on the summit of an isolated mound is still known as the Takht-i-Roostam, or Roostam's throne. Chinghiz is said to have exterminated 7000 Hindoo families who at that time peopled this valley. A castle built of sun-dried bricks stands upon a hillock commanding the valley. The houses are dome-shaped, with a hole in the centre at the top, evidently modelled on the Toorkish *yourka*, and not unlike the Kamtschadale *jourts* described in Captain King's continuation of 'Cook's Voyages.' The climate is mild, but snakes and scorpions are disagreeably plentiful. The road at last debouches from the hills by a narrow defile, easily defensible, the mountains rising out of the plain like a wall, black, bare, and abrupt.

The chief town in Khulm is properly called Tashkurghan,

though it now more frequently passes by the name of the district. In Moorcroft's time—1819 to 1825—it contained perhaps 20,000 houses, built of clay and sun-dried bricks, one storied, dome-shaped, and each standing within its own enclosure. Earthen ramparts, with wooden gates, surround the town, which is three miles in circumference. The streets are straight, and tolerably wide, with a runnel of water running down the middle. Sir Alexander Burnes, however, in 1832, estimated the population at only 10,000. According to Captain Wood, 200,000 skins, including those of dogs and cats, are annually sent thence to Bokhara. Lamb-skins, which are here procurable for 24 to 30 shillings per hundred, are sold in Bokhara at double those prices. Old Khulm is four or five miles distant.

Between Khulm and Balkh is the ruined townlet of Mazar, with its 500 houses, famous for the Ziarat or Shrine of Hazrat Ali, built by one of Timour's descendants, and locally believed to contain the body of the Shah Murdan, or king of men, Ali, the nephew of Mohammed, though he was actually buried at Nejef near Baghdad. Once a year a great fair is held at Mazar, to which the blind the halt, and the maim resort from a great distance. Some are cured and some die, but the majority bewail the want of faith that has counteracted the miraculous virtues of the shrine. During the celebration of this religious fair no highway robberies are committed in the district, though at other times of daily occurrence.

Balkh, called Amo-ool-Bulad, or Mother of Cities, is now in a state of utter decay. According to Persian tradition Balkh was the birth-place of Zoroaster, and the capital of the empire of Cyrus, whose throne—a block of white marble—was preserved in the citadel until a very recent date, if it be not still there. Firdousi makes Isfundear (Xerxes), the son of Gushtasp (Darius Hystaspes), Viceroy of Balkh, and describes his victories over

the neighbouring princes until he succumbed to the superior prowess of Roostam.

In classical times Bactra obtained a certain historic celebrity as the scene of Alexander's marriage with Roxana, of the conspiracy of the Pages, and of the execution, or murder, of Kallisthenes. It was also the chief seat of the short-lived Greco-Bactrian kingdom. During the Aryan empire Balkh was the seat of an Archimagus, and was styled the 'bannered,' and* when Zoroaster yielded to Buddha, and the Pyræum was replaced by the temple, it was still distinguished for its banners. At the time of the Arab conquests, in the middle of the seventh century, the great temple was decorated with pennons of silk a hundred yards in length. It was, however, still at the height of its glory when visited by Hiouen Tsang, who counted a hundred convents in 'Po-ho,' inhabited by 3000 monks. The New Convent boasted of a statue of Buddha made of precious metals, and of many rare and valuable articles, the offerings of the devout, but which were too frequently pillaged by neighbouring princes. Among the relics most worthy of veneration was a basin that held about three pints, in which Buddha used to perform his ablutions, probably a *lotah*. The material was somewhat of a mystery, but it was of many dazzling colours. There was a broom dignified by similar associations, with a handle two feet in length, and seven inches in circumference, set with precious stones. Yet more worthy of veneration was a tooth of the divine Teacher, an inch in length and nearly as much in breadth. The town was strongly fortified, if not over-well peopled, but the produce of the district was abundant and varied, so that it was 'difficult to enumerate all the flowers which grow in the water or on the land.'

At the period of its conquest by the Khalif Othman, the province of Balkh measured eighty leagues from east to west and

* *Edinburgh Review*, January, 1872.

forty from north to south, and the circuit of the town walls was about six miles. Marco Polo says, 'Balc is a noble city and a great, though it was much greater in former days. But the Tatars and other nations have greatly ravaged and destroyed it. There were formerly many fine palaces and buildings of marble, and the ruins of them still remain.' Although the place capitulated on condition of security to life and property, Chinghiz Khan compelled the entire population to go forth into the plain under the pretext of numbering them, when they were massacred without pity. Ibn Batuta, who visited Balkh a century later, deplores its ruined condition, and remarks that it had not been 'rebuilt since its destruction by the cursed Jengis Khan.' 'Its mosque,' he continues, 'was one of the largest and handsomest in the world. Its pillars were incomparable; three of which were destroyed by Jengis Khan,' under the impression that treasure was concealed beneath them; but, discovering his mistake, he spared the others. The youthful Aurungzeb made Balkh the capital of his trans-Himalayan government, but it was again made desolate by Nadir Shah, after whose death it fell into the hands of the Afghans, from whom it was wrested in 1823 by the Ameer of Bokhara. It was recovered, however, by Dost Mohammed in 1850, and is now included within the northern boundary line of the territories of the Ameer of Kabul.

The population, chiefly Afghans, was estimated by Sir Alexander Burnes at only 2000. The town, overlooked by a weak citadel, stands in a plain watered by the Dahash, or ancient Bactrus. Clumps of trees and broken aqueducts attest its former cultivation, but at present two-thirds of the district are waste and unproductive. Luscious fruits, however, are still procurable, and apricots as large as apples are sold for one shilling a thousand. Snow is brought down from the mountains, twenty miles distant, and may be enjoyed throughout the

summer at a very low price. Though the heat is never excessive, the place is considered unhealthy. The harvest takes place in June, about fifty days later than at Peshawur.

Ninety miles to the westward of Balkh the prosperous town of Shibrgan, formerly called Shabourkhan, stands in the midst of a richly cultivated plain. It is the Sapurgan of Marco Polo, and was then, as now, famous for its melons. 'They preserve them,' he says, 'by paring them round and round into strips, and drying them in the sun. When dry they are sweeter than honey, and are carried off for sale all over the country.' In that respect, at least, the lapse of 700 years has made no change. Still further to the westward the otherwise unimportant town of Andkhui marks the termination in that direction of the new frontiers of Afghanistan.

Eastward from Khulm lies the Kunduz district, extending thirty miles from east to west, and forty from north to south. 'The country,' says Captain Wood, 'strongly resembles the delta of the Indus, but is more moist and unfavourable to human life. The jungle grass is here taller and more dense. We saw but one village, though the number of rice mills at work and the continued barking of the dogs proved that the region must be populous.' It is indeed so unhealthy that it is proverbially said, 'If you wish to die go to Kunduz.' The roads are constructed on piles of wood driven through matted reeds and rank vegetation. The soil, however, is fertile, and grows excellent crops of rice, wheat, and barley, as well as apricots, cherries, plums, and mulberries. Towards the Hindoo Koosh the land rises into beautiful undulations, sometimes 1000 feet in height, clothed with grass and flowers, but without either trees or brushwood.

'The low swelling outlines of Kunduz,' Captain Wood rapturously exclaims, 'are as soft to the eye as the verdant sod which carpets them is to the foot.' During three months of the

year these pleasant pastures are covered with snow, but in the plain the summer heat is excessive. Two small rivers descend from the mountains and discharge themselves into the Oxus, which flows about forty miles to the north of the chief town. Kunduz is, in fact, rather a hamlet than a town, consisting of five or six hundred mud hovels, some sheds built of straw, and a certain number of Oozbeg tents. At the east end, upon a low mound surrounded by a broken-down mud wall and a dry ditch, stands the fort, built of kiln-dried bricks, the winter residence of the late Moorad Beg, a tyrant, and, in a small way, a conqueror, whose followers were simply an organized banditti 15,000 strong, with whom he overran and plundered the country from Balkh to Chinese Toorkestan.

The Oozbegs, as the dominant class, will take to wife the daughter of a Tajeek, but no Tajeek may hope to marry the daughter of an Oozbeg. The priests, being Khojas, have considerable influence, but at that time were notoriously engaged in the traffic of slaves. Few Oozbegs condescend to read or write. They delight in robes of scarlet and other glaring colours, though the women prefer dark, or pure white, dresses, with a showy silk handkerchief bound round the head. A wife may be sold, but not a dog.

The Kunduz horses are inferior to those of the Toorkomans, but not less patient of fatigue, and better adapted for hill work. On completing their first year they are mounted by a light weight, and ridden at top speed for some distance, but for the next two years the saddle is not again placed upon their backs. After the third year they are broken in, and circular shoes placed on their fore feet.

The Oozbegs take two meals a day, one in the forenoon, and the other at twilight. They prefer horseflesh, but content themselves with mutton made into soup and pillao, which they eat with white leavened bread of good quality. Tea never

comes amiss to them. It is called Keirnuk Cha, or Cream Tea, and is boiled in a large iron pot, from which it is baled out with a wooden ladle, and handed round by the host in small china bowls. It is softened with rich, clotty cream, or, where that is unobtainable, with fat, salt taking the place of sugar. The tea-leaves are sometimes served after dinner by way of dessert.

Moorad Beg's summer residence was at Khana-a-âbad, the Gana of Marco Polo, situated about seventeen miles from Kunduz on the banks of a small river crossed by a stone bridge. Immediately behind rises an isolated mountain, 2500 feet in height, called Koh Umber, which divides the Kunduz district from that of Talikhan. According to tradition the Koh Umber was transported thither from Hindostan, and on its sides may be found every herb indigenous to India. Above the hills on the road to Talikhan may be seen many eagles, with flocks of white-backed and hooded crows, as in the time of the Venetian traveller. There is, of course, a fort, and a large building for the use of the governor, besides two medressehs, and five or six hundred mud huts.

In a northerly direction towards the Oxus is the town of Hazrat Imam, as large as Kunduz, with a much superior fort encircled by a wet ditch. The place has the reputation of being unhealthy, but this is partly attributable to the inveterate habit of the Oozbegs of encamping and settling on the swampy plains rather than move to the high grounds. Of the 25,000 families deported from the northern side of the Oxus in 1830 by Moorad Beg, scarce 6000 survived eight years later. The Oozbegs hunt down the pheasants in these parts on horseback, the birds after a couple of flights running along the ground. To the south of Kunduz at the foot of the Hindoo Koosh are two small towns, Khost and Anderab, neither of which merits particular notice.

Fifty miles east of Kunduz, and 170 from Balkh, the ham-

let of Talikhan—the Talakien of Hiouen Tsang, the Taican of Polo, and the Talhan of Goës—with its three or four hundred hovels, stands in a fruitful tract of land favourable to the vine. It is now peopled by Badakhshies, probably descended from the Venetian's 'evil and murderous generation, whose great delight is in the wine-shop' (though Mohammedans); 'for they have good wine (albeit it be boiled) and are great topers; in fact, they are constantly getting drunk. They wear nothing on the head but a cord, some ten palms long, twisted round it.' They were then mighty huntsmen, and clad themselves in the skins of beasts. Salt mines are worked in the neighbouring mountains.

A market is held twice a week, and the busy scene awoke pleasant recollections in Captain Wood's mind. 'Troops of horsemen were hurrying into market, many riding double. Gaudily painted cradles, toys, bird-cages, skins of animals, and white and striped cotton cloth, were the articles forming the stock in trade of most of the dealers. All whom we met were blythe and jocund, and but for the difference of dress, and the large proportion of those who rode, I could have fancied them my own countrymen hastening to some merry fair in Old England.' Notwithstanding the bird-cages nests are not molested, and the sparrows, which flew about in flocks, took no trouble to conceal their eggs. Talikhan was taken by Chinghiz Khan after a siege that lasted upwards of six months. Enraged by the heroic resistance of the garrison, the barbarian left not a soul alive, or one stone standing upon another.

A mountain ridge divides Afghan Toorkestan from Badakhshan. The road lies through the Lattaband Pass and descends into the valley of Ak-Bolak, or the White Springs, and so on to Kila Afghan, about thirty miles from Talikhan,—when the snow is on the ground infested by packs of wolves. Taishkhan is reached after a further journey of twenty-six miles, beyond

which the Junasdurah range rises to the height of 6600 feet. When traversed by Captain Wood these mountains were covered with snow, but the descent on the eastern side was facilitated by following the tracks made by the wild hogs. 'So numerous are these animals that they had trodden down the snow as if a large flock of sheep had been driven over it.' He then crossed the narrow valley of Darah-i-Aim and the plain of Argoo, once peopled by 6000 families, but then utterly desolate. He next came upon the undulating district of Reishkhan, where Khan Khoja, fleeing from Kashgar before the victorious Chinese, was treacherously attacked, defeated, and mortally wounded by Sooltan Shah, who was himself put to death a few years later by Ahmed Shah Dourani.

Traversing the Kokcha valley, Captain Wood halted at the small hamlet of Chittah. Since his departure from Talikhan he had seen no signs of animal life save the hog-tracks and a few partridges. It was, no doubt, the winter season, but still it appeared to him strange and depressing, that except in villages thirty miles apart not a single human being had been encountered during a journey of upwards of eighty miles. Fyzabad, the present capital of Badakhshan, was only distinguished by 'the withered trees which once ornamented its gardens.' It had been destroyed by Moorad Beg, and the inhabitants carried off to Kunduz, 'a place only fit to be the residence of aquatic birds.'

It has since then revived, and is once more a place of comparative importance. It stands on the right bank of the Kokcha, and carries on a small trade in cast-iron utensils, the manufacture of which, as Colonel Yule suggests, may have been taught by Chinese exiles or slaves. The town is unwalled, but the Zagarchie, or old citadel, overlooks it from the south bank of the river, and the Meer lives in a mud fort, only useful in the event of a sudden riot. The Khirkat-i-Shureef, or the

Mosque of the Holy Shirt, once contained a garment, believed to have been worn by Mohammed. Behind Fyzabad, which is itself 3500 feet above the sea, a mountain rises to a height of 2000 feet. Thirteen miles distant, the village of Kasur crowns an eminence, not less than 6600 feet in altitude.

From the 26th December to the 30th January, 1838, Captain Wood was detained by a heavy snowfall in the cluster of hamlets that together make up the small town of Jerm, at that time the most considerable place in Badakhshan, though the population did not exceed 1500 souls. It stands on the bank of the Kokcha, at a point where the usually narrow valley expands to the breadth of a mile. Some miles higher up the river, where the width of the valley diminishes to 200 yards, the once famous mines of Lajwurd, or Lapis Lazuli,* were formerly worked by a rude gallery driven into the mountain-side.

In olden times Jerm was a comparatively large and prosperous town, but it has shared the declining fortunes of Badakhshan. 'Enduring decay,' Colonel Yule remarks, 'probably commenced with the wars of Chinghiz, for many an instance in Eastern history shows the permanent effect of such devastations. And here wave after wave of war passed over a little country isolated on three sides by wild mountains and barbarous tribes, destroying the apparatus of culture, which represented the accumulated labour of generations, and without the support of civilization, and the springs of recovery. Century after century only saw progress in decay. Even to our own time the process of depopulation and deterioration has continued.'

As already observed, Jerm consists of several detached hamlets grouped together, and each enclosed within its own outer wall. The houses are substantially built and plastered with mud, both inside and out. The roofs are flat, with a hole in

* Described in chap. vi.

the centre to permit the smoke to escape, the aperture being provided with a wooden frame, by which it can be closed at pleasure. When a room is unusually large, the roof is supported by four stout pillars arranged in a square in the middle of the apartment. The floor is strewed with straw, or covered with a felt carpet, according to the wealth or poverty of the family.

To commence housekeeping comfortably implies the possession of property to the value of nearly six pounds sterling, or, to speak by the book, £5 14—to wit: A wife costs twenty-five rupees, bedding six, an iron boiler two, culinary and other vessels one and a half (including spoons, flour sieve, antimony for the eyes, a red willow bowl, a firwood drinking bowl, tablecloth, dresser, knife to cut beans, wooden ladle, frying-pan, wooden pitcher, stone lamp, and iron girdle), the wife's wardrobe four and a half (comprising a head covering, a shirt, trousers, and shoes), and the husband's outfit eighteen and three quarters (consisting of a turban, cloak, shoes, stockings, girdle for the waist, loose trousers, a long sword, a matchlock and its equipments). Earthenware is scarce and expensive. Bread is baked upon a stone girdle, and of the same material are the lamps, cut into the shape of a shoe. Reeds are also used instead of candles, and are peeled round at a certain point, so that the light may go out of itself, instead of being blown out.

A bride, it should be mentioned, does not enter her parents' house for a year after her marriage, except that on her wedding day she visits her mother, and receives a present, generally a cow. She then entertains her female friends beneath her husband's roof, but no men are suffered to intrude on such occasions. The hill-men always go armed, but not the dwellers in the plains. The ordinary dress is that of the Oozbegs. In Upper Badakhshan, a strong man slave was, in 1836-37, valued at the same

price as a horse or a large dog, that is, at eighty rupees, or £8. Indeed, men were frequently exchanged for dogs, but young healthy girls were more highly esteemed. The Oozbegs are said to compute time by the galloping of a horse, while the more domestic Badakhshies in the upper part of the province take for their standard the preparation of soup. The penal code is severe upon donkeys. For a first offence in trespassing upon a neighbour's lands they get a sound drubbing; for a second, their ears are slit; for a third, their ears are cut off, or an eye put out, or their tail docked, and sometimes they are even lamed.

Throughout that month of January, the thermometer never rose above 48° at noon, and at sunrise was as low as 10°. But the most serious inconvenience to which the upper valley of the Oxus is exposed, is the frequency of severe earthquakes. In 1832 a shock was felt from Lahore to Jerm, where 156 persons were missing out of 310 inhabiting three hamlets that were overthrown. In the neighbouring valley of Sir Gholam, eighty-three perished out of a population of 155. The mountains are often much shattered, and landslips occur on a formidable scale.

Passing through Zebak, a considerable village with houses touching one another as in an English street, Captain Wood entered the petty State of Wakhan, after encountering the 'Bad-i-Wakhan,' a piercingly cold wind which blows for six months in the year; when 'it goes to sleep,' as the local saying has it, the clouds gather from all quarters. Wakhan, the In-po-kien of Hiouen Tsang and the Vocan of Marco Polo, embraces the upper valley of the Oxus for the distance of a three days' journey from Ishkashm. When visited by Captain Wood, in the depth of winter, it appeared to contain not more than a thousand inhabitants, though five times that number might find within its bounds a comfortable living.

The people are Sheeahs, and resemble the Tajeeks, but speak a peculiar dialect. They assert of themselves that they are descended from a Macedonian colony, planted by Alexander the Great, and, like the Badakhshies, they have a superstitious dislike to blowing out a light. They will wave their hand beneath a flame for minutes together, rather than breathe roughly upon it, and they point to some old forts formerly occupied by the Kafirs as ruins of the temples of the fire-worshippers. The men wear woollen *chupkuns*, some few sport a turban, but the ordinary head-gear is a tight-fitting cap. They are a rude and reckless community, and not at all particular as to the condition of their garments. The women's costume is simple, and consists of a long white woollen gown, with a piece of cotton cloth round the head—but this last is not universal. The women clean and spin wool, which the men weave into cloth.

From the Wakhan goat is obtained much of the hair-wool, of which Kashmeer shawls are made. A breed of dogs introduced from Chitral is much esteemed. They somewhat resemble the Scotch colly, have long ears, a bushy tail, and a slender frame, and are swift, fierce, and combative: their usual colour is black or reddish brown. Barley, pulse, and a little wheat, are grown in the lap of the valley, but not in sufficient quantity to supply the wants of the inhabitants.

Instead of a central fireplace, the Wakhanies make use of a stove placed against the side of the house, which gives out great heat, though the smoke is apt to be troublesome. When darkness approaches, the master of the house pulls down a dry willow branch from the rafters, which he cuts into convenient lengths, and lighting these primitive candles sticks them over the inner lintel of the door.

A common article of food is a kind of cheese called *kooroot*. New milk, after being curdled, is well churned, and the buttermilk, after it has been thoroughly boiled, is poured into a bag,

not too close. The whey is then drained off, and the clotted residue is used to flavour soup, whether made of beans or wheat flour.

The first town coming from the westward is Ishkashm, situated at the elbow formed by the deflection of the Panja in a north-westerly direction.* On the other side of the Panja, and as it were within the elbow-joint, may be seen the excavations which mark the old (*Balas*) ruby mines, now quite exhausted and abandoned, and given up to the Ameer of Bokhara. Higher up the river, a small fort surrounded by a group of hovels goes by the name of Kundut. Here there are no stoves, and the hole in the roof serves as a sun-dial. 'Before the house-wife begins to prepare the family meal, she looks not up at a clock, but round the walls and upon the floor for the spot on which (the sun's) golden light is streaming.' Near this place, Captain Wood came upon an encampment of a hundred Kirghiz families from the Pameer, on their first visit to Wakhan. They had with them 2000 yaks, 4000 sheep, and 1000 Bactrian camels, besides numberless dogs. They seemed healthy, but rugged, and weather-beaten. Their appetite for snuff, which they swallowed by mouthfuls, was insatiable. Even the young men were nearly toothless, which they ascribed to drinking cold water.

The outside covering of their *Kirgahs* or tents was 'formed of coarse dun-coloured felts, held down by two broad white belts about five feet above the ground. To these the dome, or roof, was secured by diagonal bands, while the felts which formed the walls were strengthened by other bands, which descended

* M. Stanislas Julien identifies the Ka-li-se-mo of Hiouen Tsang and the Casem, or Scassem, of Marco Polo, with Ishkashm, but Colonel Yule traces the Venetian traveller to Kishm, a townlet on the right bank of the Mashad, a tributary of the Kokcha. It is a warm sunny spot, a month in advance of Fyzabad. In former times, at least, it abounded with porcupines that were hunted by dogs.

in a zigzag direction between those first mentioned and the ground. Close to the door lay a bag filled with ice—the water of the family. On drawing aside the felt which screened the entrance, the air of tidiness and comfort that met our eyes was a most agreeable surprise. In the middle of the floor, upon a light iron tripod, stood a huge Russian caldron, beneath which glowed a cheerful fire, which a ruddy-cheeked spruce damsel kept feeding with fuel, and occasionally throwing a lump of ice into her cookery. . . . .

'The *Kirgah* had a diameter of fourteen feet, a height of eight, and was well lighted by a circular hole above the fire-place. Its frame-work was of the willow tree, but between it and the felt covering neat mats, made of reeds, the size of wheat-straw, and knitted over with coloured worsted, were inserted. The sides of the tent, lined with variegated mats of this description, not only looked tasteful, but imported a snug and warm appearance to the interior. Corresponding to the outside belts were two within of a finer description, and adorned with needlework. From these were suspended various articles appertaining to the tent and to the field, besides those of ornament and the sampler. Saddles, bridles, rings, thimbles, and beads, all had here their appropriate places. One side of the *Kirgah* had the family's spare clothes and bedding. In another a home-made carpet hung from the roof, making a recess in which the females dressed, and where the matron kept her culinary stores and kitchen apparatus. The opposite segment was allotted to the young lambs of the flock. A string crossed the tent, to which fifty nooses, twenty-five of a side, were attached, to each of which a lamb was fastened. While we were present, they were taken outside to their dams, and after a time again brought back into the *Kirgah*.

'Three yaks are able to carry the tent and all its contents. One takes the Oostakhan, literally, the bones, or frame-work;

another, the felts; and a third, its furniture: besides which, a seat is found upon them for the feeble or young of the family. In one *Kirgah* which we entered, the children were conning their lessons under the eye of an aged mullah. Some were learning to write, by tracing letters upon a black board with a bit of chalk, while others were humming over the torn leaves of well-thumbed copies of the Koran. Mutilated as was the condition of their books, they were nevertheless highly valued, if we might judge from the strong wooden box appropriated to their preservation.'

The Pameer Kirghiz are men of short stature, from five feet two inches to five feet six inches in height. They have deep-seated, elongated eyes, with no ridge between. The forehead is protuberant, but not high, slanting back abruptly. Their cheeks are large and puffy, and a thin beard sprouts from the chin. They are not by any means a muscular race. The women are rather good-looking, and apparently delicate. Though Soonees, they go about unveiled. They are fond of ornaments, such as beads, gems rudely set in silver, fancy objects of brass, and prettily fashioned articles cut out of the pearl-oyster shell. Both men and women wear round, hollow, brass buttons, obtained from the Chinese, and the latter are partial to a high head-dress, sometimes adorned in front with coloured beads. The Kirghiz women make good wives, being thrifty and industrious. Slaves are rare, except as maid-servants. Female children are highly valued, because a bride, not exceeding fifteen years of age, is often worth £40 to her father. A widow passes on, in the first instance, to her husband's brother, and then to the next of kin,—failing these, she returns to her father.

The Kirghiz live principally upon milk and game. Cutaneous diseases are very prevalent among both sexes. The Kirghiz ponies are rough-coated, ugly animals, without much endurance.

Brood mares are held in estimation, their milk, when acidulated, yielding, in spring-time, the intoxicating beverage called *Kumeez*. The milk is drawn off in the evening, and churned till sunrise, when it is fit to drink, a very small quantity producing inebriety. A large appetite is said to attend upon returning sobriety. The chief men affix to their names the epithet Bai-khan, or nobleman.

CHAPTER XVII.

PAMEER.

DARWAZ—ROSHAN—SHIGNAN—VARDOJ VALLEY—KAFIRS OR SIAHPOOSH—CHITRAL—LIEUTENANT HAYWARD ON THE MASSACRES COMMITTED IN YASSIN BY THE DOGRAS—HIS DEATH—GILGIT—CHILAS—BALTISTAN—PAMEER—HIOUEN TSANG—MARCO POLO—COLONEL YULE—OVIS POLI—BAM-I-DUNIAH—LAKE VICTORIA—FOUR CONFLUENTS OF THE OXUS, OR AMOU—THE GREAT GEOGRAPHICAL SWINDLE.

BEFORE ascending the elevated table-land of Pameer, it may be convenient to complete this brief notice of the petty States that occupy the broken mountainous region inclosed between the Karategeen mountains on the north, and the Hindoo Koosh, or, rather, the Himalaya, on the south. North of the Panja, and along the east bank of the Soorkh-ab, are the unexplored districts of Wakhsh—whence the Oxus probably derives its name—and Khotl. Further to the eastward runs the Valley of Darwaz—signifying 'a door'—which Colonel Yule identifies with the Kumidha of Hiouen Tsang and, perhaps, with Ptolemy's Valley of the Comedæ. The people are Tajeeks, and Mohammedans in name, but their religious notions appear to be confused on all essential points. They manufacture cotton cloths, which they exchange for grain and gunpowder. Their country is exceedingly mountainous, but if Colonel Yule's conjecture be well founded, the Seric caravans from Byzantium, travelling by way of Hyrcania, Aria, Margiana Antiocheia (Merv), and Bactra, must have 'wound with toilsome march their long array' through this steep and rugged valley.

Roshan comes next, inhabited by 1000 families, and then Shignan, with only 300, both professing the creed of the Sheeahs, and speaking a peculiar dialect. Shignan is supposed to be Hiouen Tsang's Chi-ki-ni, peopled by a savage race—perhaps the Sacæ—who knew not the difference between right and wrong, brutal, ignorant, caring for nothing but the present moment, and without provocation committing murder in cold blood. On the southern side of the Panja the beautiful table-land of Shewa, containing a small sheet of water, called Sir-i-Kul—a common name for lakes in those parts—was commended by Marco Polo for the refreshing coolness of its climate and the fresh verdure of its pastures.

South of the Shewa plateau, and westward of Ishkashm the valley of Vardoj, or Wardodj, excited Captain Wood's enthusiasm on his return from the bleak Pameer. 'As we approached the bottom of the Wardodj valley, everything wore the joyous air of spring. The change was delightful. When we passed up, snow lay everywhere. Now, the plough was in the field; wild flowers were sparkling amongst the withered herbage of the bygone year; and around the edges of the stones tufts of young grass were everywhere to be seen. The sheep let loose from their sheds were remunerating themselves for the dry and scanty fare of their winter's quarters. The streams were all unlocked, and we encamped in the open air. The raven, the jay, the lark, the bulbul, or Badakhshan nightingale, were all upon the wing. Numerous insects, too, aroused from their long sleep, began to show themselves; among them were butterflies, and a most beautifully painted species of gadfly.' In all sub-Alpine regions spring bursts forth as suddenly as Minerva from the brow of Jupiter. By the time Captain Wood again reached Talikhan, 'the fine sward was enamelled with crocuses, daffodils, and snowdrops.'

The southern spurs of the Hindoo Koosh, westward of the

Beilam river, are inhabited by a very peculiar people, called, indifferently, Kafirs, or Siâhpoosh. Marco Polo mentions their country by the name of Bacian, or Basiam, and notices their singularity of speech, and brown complexions. He accuses them of dealing with enchantments and diabolic arts, but gives them credit for wisdom. They lived upon animal food and rice, and the men wore rings in their ears, and also gold and silver brooches, sometimes set with gems.

A clear and ample description of Kafiristan and its extraordinary inhabitants is to be found in Mountstuart Elphinstone's 'Account of the Kingdom of Caubul.' According to Rennel's Map of Hindostan, the district is comprised between Kashkar on the north-east, Badakhshan on the north, Kunduz on the north-west, Anderab, Khost, and Kohistan on the west, and Kashmeer on the east. The peaks of the mountains are covered with snow for the greater part of the year, but their sides are clad with forests of pine, and furrowed by small fertile valleys in which the grape arrives at maturity, though both wheat and millet are of inferior quality. Sheep, cattle, and goats constitute the chief wealth of the villagers. The roads are little better than mountain tracks, the ravines being crossed by wooden bridges, or by swinging bridges made of ropes of withy. The villages are perched on the hill-sides, and are populous and well-to-do.

Strictly speaking, there is no national name for this people, which is not so much a nation as an aggregation of separate tribes, each dwelling in its own valley. By the Mohammedans they are generally called Siah-poosh, or the Black-Vested, though one division is best known as the Speen Kafirs, or White Infidels, from their white cotton garments. They are all fair-complexioned, with blue eyes, and are remarkably handsome, with a fine open forehead, bushy arched eyebrows, black hair and whiskers, and a lithe active figure. Unlike most

Asiatics they prefer a chair to cushions or carpet, and pride themselves on their supposed Greek descent, though it is probable that they are simply descended from the idolaters whom the Mohammedans drove out of Kandahar. Different but cognate dialects are spoken by the different sections of the community, and all based upon Sanskrit.

They believe in the Unity of the Deity, though they make to themselves graven images of wood and stone, male and female, on foot and on horseback, to represent great personages who have passed away from this world and now act as mediators and intercessors. In their eyes there is no virtue greater than a liberal and hospitable disposition. The idols are sprinkled with cow's blood, and fire is used at all religious ceremonies. They erect a stone and say: 'This stands for God, but we know not His shape.' A fire is kindled in front of the stone, and through the flames are thrown flour, butter, and water, while the blood of a victim is sprinkled upon the stone itself. Part of the flesh is burnt, and part eaten by the priests, who are hereditary, but devoid of influence.

Fish is their abhorrence, but they are partial to goats' flesh and to game. Their chief diet, however, consists of cheese, butter, milk, bread, and suet pudding. Meat they prefer half raw. Both sexes drink too freely of wine, which is of various qualities, red, white, and dark, with one kind almost of the consistence of jelly, and very strong. They use silver goblets, and possess pottery of curious patterns.

Men marry at from twenty to thirty years of age, and women at about fifteen or sixteen. A bride is occasionally valued at as many as twenty cows. Marriage is not so much a religious ceremony as an excuse for eating, drinking, singing, and dancing. Polygamy is practised, and all the drudgery is done by women. A mother and her babe are put away into a house outside the village, and are considered impure for twenty-four

days, at the expiration of which they are brought back with song and dance.

The costume of the common people consists of four goat-skins, two for a vest and two for a petticoat, worn with the long hair outside, and girded round the waist with a leather belt; their arms are uncovered. The Siah-poosh go bare-headed, except when they have slain a Moslem. They shave their heads, with the exception of a long tuft on the crown, and a curl over each ear. The beard is suffered to grow to the length of four or five inches, but they pull out the hair from the upper lip, the cheeks, and neck. Rich people wear a shirt beneath the vest, as do also the women, and instead of goat-skins clothe themselves in cotton or black hair cloth, some preferring a white blanket woven in Kashmeer, worn something like a Scottish plaid, but reaching to the knee and fastened round the waist by a belt. They likewise indulge in cotton trousers, which, as well as the shirts, are embroidered with flowers in red and blue worsted. The women dress like the men, only that their hair is plaited and twisted round on the top of their head, surmounted by a small cap, round which a light turban is wound. Silver ornaments and cowry shells are decidedly fashionable. Virgins are distinguished by a red fillet round the head. Both sexes have rings round the neck and in the ears, and are partial to bracelets of pewter or brass, and especially of silver.

The houses are built of wood, with cellars for storing cheese, ghee, wine, and vinegar. They usually sit on drum-shaped stools of wickerwork, like the Indian *morah*, and make use of tables. They are passionately fond of dancing of a vehement character. Their musical instruments are a tabor and pipe, and the dancers keep time with their voices as well as with their feet. Their music is quick, varied, and somewhat wild.

In hunting and in war, they use a bow fifty-four inches in length, with a leathern thong for string. Their arrows are

made from light reeds, and have barbed heads, occasionally poisoned. On the right side they carry a dagger, and on the left a sharp knife. Firearms and swords are still scarce, but are becoming more common than formerly. The greatest glory a Siahpoosh can ever hope to attain is by slaying a Mohammedan. Otherwise, they are represented as a harmless, affectionate people, merry and sociable, and as placable as they are passionate. It has been related in a preceding chapter how Timour succeeded in striking awe into these barbarians by lowering himself and his troops down by platforms from ridge to ridge, until he reached the level of their narrow valleys. With that one exception, they have always preserved their independence.

In the Upper Valley of the Beilam or Kunar river lies the considerable district of Chitral, which Colonel Yule is disposed to regard as identical with the Venetian traveller's Cascar, or Cashkar. Moorcroft speaks of an Upper and a Lower Chitral, each with a chief town named Mastuch, or Mastoi. The Raja, who resided chiefly at Yassin, was a Soonee, while his people were Sheeahs. They are Dards and Dungars, and speak a mixed dialect. Though tall, athletic men, they are of cowardly disposition, and the women are stigmatized as coarse and immodest. Their heads are of a conical shape, caused by a strong band being tightly bound round them in infancy. According to tradition, Chitral was the Shrab Khana, or Wine Cellar, of Afrasiab. Colonel Yule conjectures that the Pashai province of Marco Polo, described as ten days to the south of Badakhshan, coincided with Chitral, though the Pashai tribe is now settled on the left bank of the Kabul river between that city and Jelalabad—an aboriginal race, with a dialect similar to that of the Kafirs, and not improbably the Udyana of Northern Buddhist legends. In the thirteenth century they were idolaters, and, according to Marco Polo, 'a pestilent people and a crafty, and they live upon flesh and rice.'

In the spring of 1870 the compiler of this work, at that time editing a newspaper in Calcutta, received a letter from Lieutenant Hayward, dated 'Camp, Yassin, March 7,' from which the following extract is taken. A duplicate copy, sent to the editor of a journal at Allahabad, was imprudently published, to the sore prejudice of that courageous and persevering traveller. 'The countries of Chitral and Yassin have been from time immemorial under the rule of the ancestors of the present Chief of Chitral, Rajah Aman-i-Moolk, while the present Yassin Chief is descended from a branch of the same family. They claim descent from Alexander of Macedon, through the kings of Khorasan. Certainly they possess a pedigree of high antiquity, and can boast an uninterrupted succession. The elder son of the Chitral ruler takes the name of Shah Katore, which title was assumed by the grandfather of the present Chief, Aman-i-Moolk. The chiefs of Yassin have intermarried so frequently with the family of the Shah Katore, until, apart from a common descent, they have become the same in their feelings and prejudices. Even Swat can hardly be considered to be more inaccessible to Europeans and strangers from the bigotry and fanaticism of its inhabitants than the countries of Chitral and Yassin. But there is this difference. While the population of Swat owes no fealty to any ruler, and acknowledges solely the spiritual authority of the Akhoond, the inhabitants of Yassin and Chitral are as much subject to their respective rulers as any serf in Russia, or fellah in Turkey or Egypt. The ablest and most energetic of these later Yassin chiefs would appear to have been Rajah Goor Rahman Khan, who ruled over Yassin and Gilgit from about 1835 to 1858, a period ever eventful in Indian history. During the reign of this chief, Goolab Singh the Maharajah of Kashmir commenced hostilities against Gilgit, after conquering Ladakh and Baltistan. While, however, the able Goor Rahman was alive, the Dogras could never obtain

any footing in the country across the Indus. Dying in 1858, dissensions as to the succession arose amongst his sons, and the present Maharajah of Kashmir, who had succeeded Goolab Singh, was enabled to take advantage of the divided state of the country, to intrigue with members of the family. A large force of Dogras suddenly crossed the Indus at Boonji, and succeeded in establishing themselves in the fort of Gilgit, which position the Court of Jamoo has maintained solely by force of arms during the last twelve years.

'Either from ignorance of the event, or from a disinclination to interfere, this act of aggression did not call down the severe remonstrance from the British Government which it so justly merited. In the treaty of 1846 between the British Government and Maharajah Goolab Singh, it is stated in Art. I.: "The British Government transfers and makes over for ever in independent possession to Maharajah Goolab Singh and the heirs male of his body, all the hilly or mountainous country, with its dependencies, situated eastward of the river Indus, and westward of the river Ravee, including Chumba and excluding Lahoul, being part of the territory ceded to the British Government by the Lahore State, according to the provisions of Article IV. of the Treaty of Lahore dated 9th March, 1846:" And again in Art. IV.: "The limits of the territories of Maharajah Goolab Singh shall not at any time be changed without the concurrence of the British Government." It will be seen that, by thus crossing the Indus and annexing territory situated westward of the specified boundary, the Maharajah of Kashmir has signally infringed the Treaty of 1846 with the British Government, and furthermore the Treaty is being persistently infringed by the continued aggressions of the Court of Jamoo in the direction of Badakhshan and Yarkund. . .

'After the seizure of the Gilgit Fort the Dogras lost no time in planning a further advance to Yassin, or Hunza. The

Yassin territory offered the greater inducement for a raid, from the country being more fertile and productive, and the approach easier; whereas the small mountainous tract occupied by the Hunza tribe is not only most difficult of access, but yields no produce which might tempt an invader. With the exception of some petty disputes and acts of reprisal carried on, on both sides, no serious expedition was undertaken until the year 1863. In the spring of that year the Dogras secretly collected a force of some 6000 men, with the intention of invading Yassin. So unexpected was this raid that they surprised the Chief and his followers, who, seeing they had no chance of resisting such overwhelming odds, fled with their wives and families to the hill fort of Madoori, some six miles distant from Yassin. The Chief escaped to Chitral, and the Yassin villagers who had fled for safety to the hill of Madoori endeavoured to come to terms with the Dogra leaders. They were assured that no harm should befall them if they would come out of the fort and lay down their arms. They did so in the simple faith that, as sworn, no injury would be done them A part of the Dogra troops who had gone round the fort then made their appearance amongst the women and children. The men were outside the fort, and unable to protect their wives and little ones, for whom they would doubtless have shed their blood had not treachery beguiled them of their weapons.

'The Dogras immediately commenced massacring the women and children. They threw the little ones into the air, and cut them in two as they fell. It is said the pregnant women, after being killed, were ripped open, and their unborn babes were cut to pieces. Some forty women, who had been wounded and were not yet dead, were dragged to one spot and were there burnt to death by the Dogras. With the exception of a few wounded men and women who ultimately recovered, every man, woman, and child within the fort was massacred.

In all, from 1200 to 1400 of the Yassin villagers were massacred by the foulest treachery and wrong. After plundering the place the Dogras retired to Gilgit, carrying off all the cattle, together with some 2000 women and men. Several hundreds of these poor people died from exposure and starvation before they had crossed the Indus. Many Yassin villagers are now in confinement in Kashmir, while of others not a trace can be found. Most of the women are in the zenanas of the Dogra leaders and sepoys.

'I have visited Madoori, the scene of the massacre, and words would be inadequate to describe the touching sight to be witnessed on this now solitary and desolate hill. After the lapse of seven years I have myself counted 147 still entire skulls, nearly all those of women and children. The ground is literally white with bleached human bones, and the remains of not less than 400 men and women are now lying on the hillside. The Yassin villagers returned to bury their dead after the Dogras had retired, and the skulls and bones now found at Madoori are, presumably, only those of villagers whose whole families perished in the massacre. In one place, where the massacre seems to have centred, are the blackened remains of rafters mixed with charred human bones. In this spot the wounded, who were yet alive, were burnt to death by the Dogra sepoys. I have seen and conversed with many orphans in the Yassin territory, whose fathers, mothers, and brothers all perished. One little girl of eight years of age was brought to me with her right arm severed at the shoulder. At the time of the massacre she was a babe at the breast, and the blow that severed her little arm, slew her mother. Her father perished likewise. Such are the atrocities which have been committed by men in the service of a feudatory of the British Crown.

'The Dogras have twice attacked Hunza, but unsuccessfully,

since they have been driven back with heavy losses. In the autumn of 1866 they invaded the country of Dilail, lying on the right bank of the Indus opposite Chilas. Fortunately, the villagers had time to place their families in safety, and no women were massacred. Some 120 of the Dilail peasantry were, however, seized and immediately hung, the sepoys cutting at them with their tulwars, while they were hanging and yet alive. On returning from Dilail to Gilgit the Dogra force were caught in a heavy snow-storm on the Choujar Pass, where nearly 150 sepoys perished from the cold. No active aggressions have since occurred, but the Maharajah of Kashmir has pensioned a brother of the Yassin Chief, an unscrupulous villain who has already murdered an uncle, a brother, and the whole of that brother's family, and who is now in Gilgit petitioning for troops to take Yassin and rule there on behalf of the Dogras. . . . .

'It is, I believe, well known that Russian agents have been well received in Kashmir. At least, this is known to those who have had opportunities of ascertaining the fact, and viewing the system of policy pursued by the Court of Jamoo. I may even hint at agents of the Maharajah who are now in Central Asia, of agents in Tashkend and in Bokhara, all sent secretly by the most loyal feudatory of the Viceroy of India. The late annexation of the district of Kolab to Khokand brings Russian influence to within little more than 200 miles of the Pass at the head of the Yassin and Gilgit valleys. That the Maharajah is now intriguing with Russia through Bokhara cannot be doubted, nor is it less clear that, should he be allowed to continue his present policy, he will shortly involve the British Government in what may be most serious complications in Central Asia. . . When this loyal feudatory was lately paying his respects to the Duke of Edinburgh at the Lahore Durbar, amidst all the tinsel and glitter that Oriental pomp

and splendour could throw around him, would that those heaps of human skulls and bones could have been there to tell their silent tale of treachery and bloodshed. . .

'For my expedition, I may mention that I have reached Yassin, and have met with a friendly reception from the Rajah Meer Wulli Khan, the Chief of the country. I have explored nearly all the country in the basin of the Gilgit and Yassin rivers, and have now just returned from the foot of the Darkote Pass leading over into Wakhan and the basin of the Oxus. The Pass, as well as the Shundur Pass leading into Chitral, is now closed by the snow, and I find there is no chance of getting laden animals across until the month of June. Once across on to the Pamir, and I am very sanguine of being able to explore the whole country. The Yassin Chief has promised to assist in every way, and altogether everything promises well for the final success of the expedition. . . As it is somewhat risky staying in Yassin until the Passes open, I am returning to Gilgit, with the intention of passing straight on to the Pamir as soon as the Passes open.'

To this interesting communication was appended the following Postscript, dated March 22nd, Camp, Gilgit Valley:—'I have just returned to Gilgit, most fortunately. The Kashmir officials here have caused a report to be spread that I had been plundered in Yassin (on the contrary, I have been particularly well treated), and the Kashmir force has marched out towards Gilgit with the intention of invading Yassin. They are now hurrying back, but not before I have become acquainted with the facts of the case, and the deep scheme to forward their own views by such an act of faithlessness. Had I remained in Yassin and they had invaded, such an act would have been fatal to the whole Pamir expedition. The Yassin people could but have connected the aggression with my presence there.'

No man can avoid his fate. On renewing his attempt to reach the upper valley of the Oxus, Lieutenant Hayward was brutally murdered in the Yassin territory at the foot of the Darkote Pass. He was aware of his danger and had kept watch all night, revolver in hand. Towards the dawn, overcome by fatigue and anxiety, he appears to have relaxed his vigilance, perhaps to have fallen into a doze, when he was suddenly seized, dragged some distance from the tent, and slain with his own sword while uttering a prayer.

The Maharajah of Kashmeer, the vassal of the British Crown, affected much sorrow at this tragical event, but finding that the Indian Government was more intent on imposing a vexatious and oppressive income-tax upon its subjects than on avenging the death of a British officer, a martyr in the cause of science, he soon conformed to the supineness that prevailed at Simla. After all, it might have seemed fastidious to make much fuss over the murder of a solitary Englishman, after having sold the country and all that was therein to the present Chief's predecessor for three quarters of a million sterling. Traffic in human beings is an atrocious and horrible thing—unless it be done on a sufficiently wholesale and extensive scale. To barter an individual, or even a family, for gold and silver is held a crime equivalent to piracy, but to dispose of a whole nation for a good round sum is an act of statesmanship and a step towards a Peerage.

For the rest, the petty State of Gilgit, on the right bank of the Indus, may measure 100 miles from north to south, with a mean breadth of 26 miles. Its inhabitants are Dardoos,—the Daradas of Sanskrit geography and the Daradæ of Strabo. The chief town, consisting of three or four hundred houses, is nestled in a narrow valley, pleasantly wooded, and hemmed in by lofty mountains. Grapes, mulberries, figs, pomegranates, walnuts, and melons arrive at great perfection, and wine even

is made,—the people being nominally Sheeahs, but not strict observers of any particular system of religion or morality. The chief currency is in the form of gold dust, found in the sands of a little river that flows through the valley, and from which the Rajah collects a small royalty.

To the south-west, and on the banks of the same stream, lies the Chilas valley, whose inhabitants, formerly sincere Kafirs, are now insincere Mohammedans. South-east of Gilgit the mountainous and little known region of Baltistan occupies the upper valley of the Indus, extending sixty miles in length, and thirty-six in breadth. The chief town is named Skardo, and the people are probably the same as Ptolemy's Bultai. Not improbably this may have been the Po-lou-lo of the Buddhist Pilgrim, who reviles the inhabitants as brutal, regardless of justice and humanity, mean-looking, and devoid of religion. Though several convents existed, the monks were indolent and averse from study. At a later period, the name of Bolor seems to have been given to this district, whence it was transferred to an imaginary chain of mountains supposed by Humboldt and Ritter to have been the meridional axis of Asia.

It is time, however, to return to Captain Wood, whom we left at Kundut on the south side of the Panja. Crossing that river a little higher up, he reached the village of Langar-Kaish at an elevation of 10,800 feet, the last inhabited place he met with before he stood upon the table-land of Pameer. Instead of a fanciful meridional axis, he found himself upon an immense knotted mass of mountains, marking the convergence or point of bifurcation of two enormous ranges; of the Tian Shan to the north-east, and of the Himalayahs, with their parallel chains, the Karakoram and the Kuen Lun, to the south-east.

The mountain-land between the Upper Oxus valley and the basin of Eastern Toorkestan is, according to Colonel Yule, one of the least known regions of the surface of the globe. So

recently as 1864 it was commonly believed that the distance from Fyzabad to Kashgar did not exceed 200 miles, whereas it is now ascertained to be more than 350. Between Yarkund and the western side of this rugged plateau there are no settled towns or villages. It was formerly reported, indeed, that there existed a town named Karchu, but it now turns out that Karchu was an erroneous transliteration of Hatchūt or Ketchūt in the Chinese tables of the later Jesuit surveyors, and which was intended to indicate Kanjut or Hunza near Gilgit.

Hiouen Tsang describes Po-mi-lo as a bleak waste situated between two snowy mountains, icy cold, subject to violent winds, and where snow falls night and day, even in spring and summer. The soil is so impregnated with salt, and so covered with pebbles, that corn and fruit refuse to grow. Even shrubs are rarely seen, nor are there any inhabitants. In the centre is a great lake full of dragons (Nâgahrada), but the water is pure and clear as crystal, and unfathomable. It has a sweet and pleasant flavour, though abounding with crocodiles, tortoises, and other ungainly monsters. The dark blue surface is all alive with cranes, geese, ducks, and wild fowl. Enormous eggs are found on the plains and marshes, and sandy isles. A river runs out of the western extremity, and flows into the Potsou (Oxus), while another river issues from the eastern extremity, and joins the Si-to beyond Kashgar.

The Venetian traveller, relating his personal experiences, is on all main points corroborated by Captain Wood, the only European who has since visited that singular country, until its recent exploration by Colonel Gordon and his party. 'There are,' he says, 'numbers of wild beasts of all sorts in this region. And when you leave this little country (Wakhan) and ride three days north-east, always among mountains, you get to such a height that 'tis said to be the highest place in the world. And when you have got to this height you find [a great lake

between two mountains, and out of it] a fine river running through a plain clothed with the finest pasture in the world; insomuch that a lean beast there will fatten to your heart's content in ten days. There are great numbers of all kinds of wild beasts; among others, wild sheep of great size, whose horns are good six palms in length. From those horns the shepherds make great bowls to eat from, and they use the horns also to enclose folds for their cattle at night. [Messer Marco was told also that the wolves were numerous, and killed many of those wild sheep. Hence quantities of their horns and bones were found, and these were made into great heaps by the way-side, in order to guide travellers when snow was on the ground.] The plain is called Pamier, and you ride across it for twelve days together, finding nothing but a desert, without habitations or any green thing, so that travellers are obliged to carry with them whatever they have need of.

'The region is so lofty and cold that you do not even see any birds flying. And I must notice also that, because of this great cold, fire does not burn so brightly, nor give out so much heat as usual, nor does it cook food so effectually. Now, if we go on with our journey towards the east-north-east, we travel a good forty days, continually passing over mountains and hills, or through valleys, and crossing many rivers and tracts of wilderness. And in all this way you find neither habitation of man nor any green thing, but must carry with you whatever you require. The country is called Bolor. The people dwell high up in the mountains, and are savage idolaters, living only by the chase, and clothing themselves in the skins of beasts. They are in truth an evil race.'

With regard to fire not burning well at a great height, Major Montgomerie informed Colonel Yule that this was a mistake. The real difficulty is in procuring a sufficient supply of good fuel. It is true, however, that water does not boil pro-

perly at a greater elevation than 15,000 feet, and consequently a cup of good tea is out of the question, neither do rice, dhal, and potatoes, become as soft as might be wished.

'The old pictures of Eden,' Colonel Yule observes, 'figure the four rivers as literally diverging from a central lake to the four quarters of the earth; and no spot so nearly realizes this idea as the high table-land of Pameer in the centre of the Asiatic world; upon whose lofty plains a tussock of grass decides the course of the waters, whether with the Oxus to the frontier of Europe, or with the Yarkund river to the verge of China; whilst the feeders of the Jaxartes and Indus from the borders of the same treasury of waters complete the square number, and the lakes that spot the lofty surface lend themselves to round the resemblance.' Lieutenant Hayward, however, ascertained by personal investigation that the Yarkund does not descend from Pameer, but from a glacier a little to the north-west of the Karakoram Pass, and there is reason to question the previous impression that any of the true Pameer drainage descends into the basin of Eastern Toorkestan.

The plateau is said to be at least 180 miles in length from north to south, and 100 in breadth from east to west. 'It consists,' says Colonel Yule, 'chiefly of stretches of tolerably level steppe, broken and divided by low rounded hills, much of it covered with saline exudations, but interspersed with patches of willow, and thorny shrubs, and in summer with extensive tracts of grass, two or three feet in height, the fattening properties of which have been extolled by travellers from Marco Polo to Faiz Buksh. Many lakes are scattered over the surface of the plateau from which streams flow. Wild fowl abound upon these lakes in summer, to an extraordinary degree; and in the vicinity of water deer of some kind are very numerous, and the great sheep (*ovis Poli*) apparently all over the plateau. In 1869 a murrain amongst these latter is said to have killed

them off in multitudes. A goat called Rang, affording a fine shawl wool, is found on the steppe; also a kind of lynx, whose fur is valued. Foxes and wolves frequent Pameer; bears and tigers are occasional visitors. The wild yak, according to Faiz Buksh, is also found there; if this be true, Pameer is its west and north limit. Pameer was at one time the summer haunt of a large nomad population of Kirghiz with their numerous flocks; but the depredations of the Shighnis (regarded also with horror by the Kirghiz as Shiah heretics), and other kidnapping neighbours, are said to have driven them to the eastern valleys, or to the Kokan territory, and the only summer visitors now are about one thousand families, who frequent the shores of Rangkul in Little Pameer.'

In Moorcroft's time the Kirghiz still pastured their flocks on these lofty grazing grounds, and mention is made of a chief named Gillim Bai, whose possessions comprised 30,000 sheep and goats, 500 yaks, and 200 camels. This patriarch dwelt in a house surrounded by a hundred cottages, but as a rule the Kirghiz clung to their ancestral tents. The surface of the plateau is occasionally broken by peaks that rise to a considerable height, one near lake Victoria attaining an altitude of 19,000 feet above the sea. Difficulty of respiration is experienced in all parts, garlick, leeks, and dried fruits being used as an antidote. The eastern boundary is formed by a belt of lofty mountains, upwards of 20,000 feet above the sea level, from which steep rugged spurs run down into Eastern Toorkestan. The Kizil-Yart branch of this range—the Trans-Alai chain of the late Professor Fedchenko—traverses the plateau north of Karakul, and separates Pameer from the Dasht or Steppe of Alai. As it runs to the west, grass grows at a greater elevation. The medium height, according to that lamented *savant*, exceeds 18,000 feet, with peaks not less than 25,000 feet—altogether, a very grand chain of mountains.

The Alai Steppe runs from west to east, and is drained by the Karategeen Soorkh-ab. It extends forty miles in one direction, and from seven to fourteen in the other. At the western extremity it is about 8000 feet above the sea, but at the eastern it rises to 12,000. The Kizil Yart Pass from near Karakul into the Alai Steppe does not present many difficulties, and two or three accessible passes lead from the steppe into Khokan. The Taimurum Pass leads north-east into the Terek Pass, the principal communication between Kashgar and Ush. The northern boundary of Pameer—still following the sure guidance of Colonel Yule—is the rugged region between the Karategeen and Khokan, enclosing the comparatively unknown Tajeek States of Macha and Ignao. To the south towers the tremendous barrier of the Hindoo Koosh, traversed, however, by nineteen passes. On these mountains no timber trees are to be found from Pameer to Koh-i-Baba, north-west of Kabul, except a dwarf fir called Archa. Poplars are planted near rivulets, and the almond and pistachio nut are indigenous in many parts of the range. Several varieties of willow also grow as high as 13,000 feet above the sea, but are mere shrubs. The chief fuel is a scrubby furze-bush without much fibre, but excellent charcoal is made from the almond trees.

The wild sheep, locally called kutch-kar, is described as a noble animal, with a venerable beard, and two magnificent horns of great weight that curl round. A pair of these horns, presented by Captain Wood to the Royal Asiatic Society, measured round the curve four feet eight inches in length, and fourteen and a quarter inches round the base, the distance between the tips being three feet nine inches. Even when out of condition a single carcase is a good load for a pack-horse, such as are used in the hill country. The meat in winter is tough and ill-tasted, but in the autumn is said to resemble venison. The wool is of a dun colour. The kutch-kar, or

ovis Poli, wanders over the steppe in flocks of five or six hundred, which are much worried by wolves. The horns are still used to mark off inclosures, and are piled in heaps to indicate the snow-covered track. There is another description of sheep, if it do not rather belong to the deer tribe, called Rass, with straight spiral horns, and with redder wool than that of the kutch-kar.

The Pameer table-land is known to Asiatics as the Bam-i-Duniah, or roof of the world; the idea being suggested by the flat terraced roofs of Oriental houses. Its mean elevation is from 15,000 to 16,000 feet above the sea. It may be said to be the central boss between India, Eastern Toorkestan, Russian Toorkestan, and Khokan. From a small lake on this plateau, situated in 37° 27′ N., and 73° 40′ E., issues the Panja, now diplomatically accepted as the main branch of the Amou or Oxus, though the south branch traced by Major Montgomerie's Meerza to Pameer Kul, at an elevation of 13,300 feet, is somewhat longer than the northern branch traced by Captain Wood to Sir-i-Kul, at an altitude of 15,500 feet.

This lake, sometimes called the Lake of Great Pameer, and sometimes Sikandari-Kul, or Alexander's Lake, is now recognized by European geographers as Lake Victoria. It is fourteen miles in length from east to west, and about one mile in breadth. On three sides it is bordered by hills about 500 feet high, but which on the south side rise to the height of 3500 feet above its banks, or 18,800 feet above the sea level, and are covered with perpetual snow. Indeed, at the time of Captain Wood's visit, the whole country was buried in snow, with a dark angry sky overhead, not a breath stirring, not a bird or a beast within sight. The water of the lake was frozen to the depth of thirty inches, and 'owing to the great rarity of the atmosphere a few strokes of the pick-axe produced an exhaustion that stretched us upon the snow to recruit our strength.'

The lake itself was not more than nine feet deep in the centre, and the water was of a reddish colour, with a slightly fetid smell; the bottom being oozy and tangled with weeds. An attempt to measure the breadth of the lake by the carriage of sound entirely failed through the tenuity of the atmosphere. 'A musket loaded with blank cartridge, sounded as if the charge had been poured into the barrel, and neither wads nor ramrod used. When ball was introduced the report was louder, but possessed none of the sharpness that marks a similar charge in denser atmospheres. The ball, however, could be distinctly heard whizzing through the air.' Conversation could not be kept up. A run at full speed for a distance of fifty yards produced pain in the lungs, and prostration that lasted for some hours. Some of the party were dizzy with headache, and any sort of muscular exertion became very soon distressing. The pulse rose in some instances to 124 beats in the minute, and in none was less than 110.

The line of perpetual snow is here a little over 17,000 feet. By the end of June the ice is broken up and the hills clear of snow, when the surface of the lake is covered with aquatic birds. 'The grass of Pameer they (the Kirghiz) tell you is so rich that a sorry horse is here brought into good condition in less than twenty days; and its nourishing qualities are evidenced in the productiveness of their ewes, which almost invariably bring forth two lambs at a time. Their flocks and herds roam over an unlimited extent of swelling grassy hills of the sweetest and richest pasture, while their yaks luxuriate amid the snow at no great distance above their encampment on the plains.'

The Amou, or Oxus, in its upper course is formed by the confluence of four rivers, traced by Colonel Yule with characteristic conciseness and lucidity. I. The Surkh-ab, or Kizil-su—literally, Red Water—rises in the Alai steppe which it drains, receiving from the left the river Muk, and rushes through the

almost unknown Karategeen district, in a deep channel between narrow gorges. The population of this state is estimated at 100,000 souls, of the Galchas race, speaking Persian. No trade of any kind seems to be carried on. The Khan claims descent from Alexander the Great, and the country is supposed to have been formerly peopled by the Parœtacæ or Parœtaceni. It was conquered in the early part of the present century by the Khan of Darwaz, who expelled the native princes, but it appears that they have since recovered their ancient possessions. Horses and cattle are bred in considerable numbers, and sufficient corn is grown for home use. Gold washing, working the salt mines, and the manufacture of very tolerable iron, furnish employment for those who are not engaged in agricultural pursuits. Leaving Karategeen the Surkh-ab flows through Kulab, coincident with the old provinces of Wakhsh and Kotl, and which in the palmy days of the Arabs was full of trade and industry, both of which are now neglected. The Surkh-ab then joins the Panja above the junction of the Kokcha, near the little town of Kurghan Tapah or Tippah.

II. The Panja is formed by the confluence of two streams near Fort Panja, 10,000 feet above the sea. These streams descend from Pameer: the one, named Darah-i-Sir-i-Kul, issues from Lake Victoria, whence it hastens down for sixty-five to seventy miles, till it joins Captain Wood's 'Stream of Sarhad,' coming from the Sarhad Wakhat, or Wakhan Marches, and proceeding from a lakelet known as the Barkat, or Pool, of Yassin. The course of this stream is about 100 miles in length, passing through a very narrow valley, well peopled towards the lower end, the inhabitants living in contiguous houses of stone or mud, warmed by stoves—the Po-mi-lo valley of Hiouen Tsang. From the Panja Fort, the river of that name flows for sixty-six miles through a valley varying in width from a few hundred yards to a mile. At the western extremity of Wakhan

the Panja makes an elbow, enclosing the ruby mines, and then turns to the north, skirting Shighnan, Roshan, and Darwaz.

III. The Kokcha, a less considerable stream, deriving its name from the colour of its waters—'Kok' in Toorkee signifying 'blue'—is formed above the Fyzabad defiles by the confluence of two little rivers from the Jerm and Vardoj valleys. It then forces its way through a narrow gorge, called the Tangi, or Strait of Badakhshan, and receiving several tributaries falls into the Amou near the fertile plain of Cha-ab.

IV. The Aksarai, called also the Surkh-ab for some distance from its source, descends from the Bamian Pass. Near Ghori the valley opens out, and at Kunduz the river takes the name of Aksarai, and joins the Amou about 160 miles above Khoja-saleh.

The respective courses of these different rivers are thus estimated by Colonel Yule. I. The Surkh-ab, from its probable source in the Karategeen highlands to the mouth of the Aksarai, 400 miles. II. The Panja, from the Barkat Yassin to the same point, 425 miles. III. The Kokcha, from the probable source of the Jerm river, 225 miles. IV. The Bamian Surkh-ab, or Aksarai, 220 miles. The entire length of the Amou from Barkat Yassin to the Aral is thus about 1400 miles, allowing 200 miles for windings.

The difficulty raised by the Court of St Petersburg to the adoption of the Panja as the line of demarcation between Central Asia and the dependencies of Afghanistan may be partly, perhaps principally, traced to an extraordinary geographical swindle apparently perpetrated by the learned orientalist Klaproth. On the 14th August, 1806, the archives of the Russian War Office were enriched by elaborate maps, with thirty astronomical determinations of position, together with the journal of a certain Freiherr Georg Ludwig von — (the name being left blank), who pretended to have been deputed by

the Indian government at the close of the last century to purchase horses in Toorkestan. For Anglo-Indian readers the bare statement carries its own contradiction, but the Russian government found it convenient to be credulous, and, seemingly without further inquiry, adopted the geographical reports of this anonymous and apocryphal traveller.

In 1821, Julius Henry Von Klaproth translated the itinerary of a Chinese traveller through Eastern Toorkestan, harmonizing with Freiherr Georg Ludwig's 'personal' observations. At a somewhat later period Lord Strangford discovered in the Foreign Office in Downing Street a manuscript report of a Russian expedition through Central Asia to the frontiers of India accomplished in the beginning of this century, and which had been secretly purchased from Klaproth. Subsequently it was ascertained that these three several narratives were evidently written to illustrate a Chinese map constructed by the Jesuit missionaries in square blocks, one of which, containing Wakhan, Badakshan, Pameer, Roshan, and Shighnan, had been accidentally placed the wrong way, the horizontal sides being turned vertical, or 90° degees out of their proper position. Since the exposure of this error by Sir Henry Rawlinson and Colonel Yule, the Russian government, as well as our own, has been compelled to acknowledge the inaccuracy of its maps, and to replace these districts where nature originally fixed them. M. Veniukof would hardly now declare that 'whoever is ruler of Bolor and Badakhshan is in a position not only to dictate to the Chinese at Kashgar and Yarkund, but also is master of the road that leads to India.'

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE KHIVAN EXPEDITION.

COLONEL MARKOSOF'S RECONNAISSANCE IN 1872—DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENCE—ADVANCE OF GENERAL GOLOF'S CORPS—A GRAND DUKE UNDER FELT—FRIENDLINESS OF THE BOKHARIANS—SKIRMISH WITH TOORKOMANS—REPULSE OF THE KHIVANS—PASSAGE OF THE AMOU—OCCUPATION OF HAZARASP—FALL OF KHIVA—GENERAL VEREFKIN'S MARCH—COLONEL LOMAKIN'S MARCH—COLONEL MARKOSOF'S DISASTER—SUBMISSION OF THE KHAN—PEACE—DISTRIBUTION OF HONOURS—SIR HENRY LAWRENCE ON A RUSSIAN INVASION OF INDIA—SIR THOMAS MUNRO ON OUR TREATMENT OF THE NATIVES—CONCLUSION.

In the autumn of 1872, a small Russian force, consisting of 1000 foot, 300 horse, and six guns, under the command of Colonel Markosof, marched out from Krasnovodsk, on the Caspian, and advanced without molestation to the borders of the Khivan territories. The object of this expedition was simply to effect a reconnaissance, and it so far succeeded that it obtained practical experience of the suddenness of Toorkoman onslaught. Too contemptuous of the enemy to send out skirmishers, Colonel Markosof found himself in a moment in the midst of a cloud of cavalry, and was glad to escape with the loss of 150 camels and nearly all his horses. The numbers of the killed and wounded are seldom published by the Russians, and never correctly.

The question of peace or war, if not previously determined, was necessarily decided by this repulse, for in the East a disaster can never safely be allowed to pass unremedied and unavenged. At the same time there can be no doubt, notwithstanding Prince Gortchakof's protestations and denials, that

military operations against Khiva on an extensive scale were meditated, if not actually arranged, by the Court of St Petersburgh in 1869. And it must be frankly admitted that hostilities were fully justified by the persistence of the Khivans in carrying off Russian subjects, and selling them into captivity. The new establishment at Krasnovodsk, however, was declared to be merely a trading factory, 'protected by a small armed force,' but which could not be correctly spoken of as a fort. 'Something,' also, was to be done 'to ascertain the feasibility of opening up the old course of the Oxus to the Caspian,' and it was confidently asserted that there were 'no physical difficulties to prevent a military force from marching from the sea to the river.'

In March, 1872, M. Stremooukof, director of the Asiatic department of the Russian Chancery, informed Lord A. Loftus that the Khan of Khiva treated with contempt and insult General Kaufmann's letters of expostulation, and obstinately refused to hold friendly relations with the Governor of Toorkestan. In reply to an inquiry from Lord Loftus, M. Stremooukof charged the Khan with being in community with the nomadic tribes who pillaged the caravans, with sheltering the marauders and participating in the booty. 'The difficulty we have in dealing with Khiva,' continued the Russian diplomatist, 'is the fact of its being so weak. If we were to chastise the Khan, the whole fabric would fall like a pack of cards.' He added that 'a reconnaissance had already been made on both sides of Khiva, from the side of the Caspian and from Tashkend, and that the occupation of Khiva would offer no strategical difficulties.'

At a somewhat later period the Khan became alarmed by these military reconnaissances from opposite directions, and expressed a wish to send an envoy to St Petersburg. He was naturally required, as a preliminary step, to liberate all Russians

held in bondage within his territories, but he would neither comply with this just demand nor hold direct intercourse with General Kaufmann, Governor-General of Russian Toorkestan. No alternative remained, but to submit to constant outrages, or to inflict such a severe chastisement as would not easily be forgotten. The latter course was inevitably adopted, and a considerable force, equipped with a completeness that betrayed the length of the preparations, was rapidly organized for the subjugation of the Khanat.

Including all arms, the total strength of the three divisions, or five detachments, ordered to concentrate upon Khiva, was probably between twelve and fourteen thousand men, with sixty or seventy guns. The Toorkestan division under the supreme command of General Kaufmann was divided into two columns. One of these, under General Golof, assisted by Lieutenant-Colonel Baron von Kaulbars, left Kazaly or Kazalinsk, near the mouth of the Syr, on the 22nd March, and proceeded nearly due south to the Boukan Hills. The second corps, called the Jizzak column, under General Golovatchof, accompanied by His Imperial Highness Prince Eugene Maximilianovich Romanofsky, Duke of Leuchtenberg, may be said to have started from Fort Perofsky, though its head-quarters were at Tashkend. The van of this column left Tashkend on the 13th March, and the entire Eastern, or Toorkestan, division was concentrated at Khala-ata or Khalaat, ninety miles east of the Amou, on the 24th April, when General Kaufmann took the command into his own hands.

His Imperial Highness, the Grand Duke Nicholas Constantinovich, being associated with the fortunes of General Golof, a few rays of 'the fierce light that beats upon a throne,' have gilded the earlier movements of the Kazalinsk corps. General Romanof, the military correspondent of the *Goloss*—who subsequently committed suicide—was on the Staff of the Grand

Duke, and thus describes His Imperial Highness's first experience of campaigning in the desert:—'We eat, live, and sleep in a large kebitka (the cupola-shaped tent of the nomads of Central Asia). To the left of the entrance is placed the bedstead of the Grand Duke; next to it, opposite the entrance, is mine; in a line with mine and to the right of the entrance is that of Dr Moreff, and next to him, nearer to the entrance, on the floor, sleeps Baron Kaulbars. In the middle of the round kebitka is placed a little iron stove, with an iron chimney let through the roof; between the stove and my bedstead there is a folding-up table on which we take our meals, write our letters, &c. Near the bedsteads and beneath them are piles of saddles, bags, parcels, and portmanteaus. The walls of the tent are hung with our overcoats, caps, revolvers, and swords. The above is a description of our nomad abode, near to which stands a similar kebitka for our servants, furnished with an iron cooking stove, on which our tea and dinner are prepared. In this tent are located the Grand Duke's footman, the Court huntsman, Dmitry Babur; his Highness's Cossack, Ignatius Tobolsky; my military servant, Alexander; the Cossacks of his Highness's escort; and the people who have charge of our horses. Both these kebitkas, with their sides, stoves, and coverings, are packed on three camels, and accompany us everywhere. They are put up and taken to pieces in half an hour. On arriving at the halting-place, or the night encampment, Alexander's first duty is to take my copper kettle off his pack and fill it with any kind of water he can get, generally brackish or tainted, place it on the fire made by the Cossacks of the escort of all kinds of steppe plants, such as wormwood, camel's thorn, tamarisk, &c. Tea is then put into the copper kettle, and notwithstanding its evident dirtiness we drink it with great satisfaction out of metal tumblers. The bad taste of the tea is counteracted by a slice of lemon, extract of cranberry, or acid wine.'

For the first 150 miles, all went well with this corps. Out of 3000 camels not above a hundred had given in. The health of the troops, 2000 of the lower grades, was satisfactory, and their daily rations consisted of half a pound of fresh meat, a little wine, and one pound of tea for a hundred men. Every man had a sheepskin and a piece of felt to lie upon, and ten kibitkas were allowed to each regiment, besides one for the officers and one for the sick. In three days the 'arid loose sands' of the Kizil Kum, between sixty and seventy miles in extent, were safely traversed, though not without great fatigue to men and beasts. Casks containing in all 2300 gallons of water, in addition to what each man carried, were slung on camels, and proved sufficient until they reached the deep wells of Kizil-Kak. On the 2nd April, General Golof had reached the Boukan Hills, where he received instructions from General Kaufmann to push on into the territories of Bokhara.

By that time the heat at mid-day had become intolerable, though the nights were still piercingly cold. On the 24th April a junction was effected with the Toorkestan, or Jizzak, column, which had suffered considerably in crossing the steppe. Owing to the general excellence of the arrangements water, indeed, never failed the troops, but they were much harassed by storms of wind, dust, and cold rain beating in their faces, with the thermometer at night as low as 5° Reaumur. Although great exertions were made by the sappers to clear the road of obstructions, the guns had to be lowered down the steep descents by ropes, while the camels gave much trouble by their fastidiousness as to the weight and adjustment of their burdens. Both the Ameer of Bokhara and the Khan of Khokan had their representatives in General Kaufmann's camp, charged to render him all the assistance in their power, just as a pack of wolves will turn upon and tear to pieces any one of their number that may be sick or wounded.

At the well of Balta Saldyr, the Governor of Nourata, 'dressed in a brocaded dressing-gown and green Cashmere shawl, and mounted on a handsome horse,' rode forward to pay his respects to the Russian General, and placed 100 camels at his disposal, while the nomads opened a sort of fair, and offered for sale, fuel, cakes, tobacco, raisins, &c. The Governor also entertained the General and his Staff at an oriental repast, at which tea, pillao, and confectionery were plentifully served. He further presented the detachment with a thousand bundles of clover. 'Beyond Balta Saldyr,' writes a correspondent of the *Invalide*, 'the wide expanse of the desert offers a most dreary aspect. Nothing but sand, with just a few thistles and absinth plants to relieve the dire monotony of the scene. The further you penetrate the less vegetation there is, and the higher the sand-hills become. Sometimes the water is excellent, on other occasions it is slightly salt, though, as a rule, very tolerable, and fit to drink. The wells of the steppe are carefully dug, some of them reaching a depth of 100 feet, with a diameter of five feet and more. The inside is lined with stones, and the mouth protected from sand by an elevation of stones and trunks of trees. A bucket of goatskin attached to a rope is let down, and acts so well that even if there is but little water and the bucket touches the bottom, it never brings up any mud. We live chiefly upon biscuits and preserved food. As to the horses, they have to content themselves mostly with barley.'

The united Toorkestan division may be taken at about 5000 combatants, 1400 horses, 9000 camels, thirty-two guns, four mortars, and four iron-ferry-boats. The Khan of Khiva, tardily coming to his senses, sent to the Russian camp twenty-one Russian subjects who had been kidnapped within the previous four years, and expressed his readiness to negotiate. General Kaufmann, however, merely accepted the prisoners, and prosecuted his march. Water now becoming scarce, an advanced

guard was pushed forward under Major-General Bardofsky, preceded by a platoon of riflemen, and in front of these a patrol of eight Cossacks, while a short distance a-head of these again rode a small party of horsemen, consisting of Lieutenant-Colonels Ivanof and Tichmenief, four Cossacks, and nine Kirghiz guides. Late in the evening, a body of Toorkomans suddenly swooped down upon their prey, cutting down the leading guide, and at the first discharge wounding the two officers, the four Cossacks, and three of the Kirghiz. They feared, however, to come to close quarters, notwithstanding their overwhelming numbers and the comparatively disabled condition of this gallant little band. The sound of the firing brought up the patrol at the gallop, and the riflemen at the double, and the Toorkomans retreated with three killed and six wounded. This petty skirmish was a fair illustration of the entire campaign, so far as fighting was concerned. Beyond natural obstructions the invaders experienced no opposition worthy of the name.

The real object of General Bardofsky's separation from the main body was to dig as many wells as possible at Adam Kriglan, and when he had excavated twenty General Kaufmann set out from Khalaat. On the 15th May he made a fresh start from Adam Kriglan, but, owing to the delay caused in loading the camels and leading them down the steep hillocks of loose sand, very little progress was made, and water again running short the main body moved on to Alty-Kuduk, while General Bardofsky returned to Adam Kriglan and occupied three days in sinking forty more wells and in filling his casks and bottles. While thus engaged he was attacked by a small body of Toorkomans, who were, however, easily repulsed without any casualties on the Russian side. The camels now began to perish by hundreds. Of the 2800 camels belonging to the train before leaving Khalaat, only 1240 survived when General Bardofsky returned to Alty-Kuduk. It became necessary, therefore, still

further to subdivide the small force collected at that spot. General Kaufmann accordingly pushed on, on the 21st, with ten companies of infantry, ten guns, and one sotnia of Cossacks.

The country between Alty-Kuduk and the Amou is described as a succession of mounds or huge billows of loose dry sand, excessively fatiguing, and affording shelter to the enemy's skirmishers. Throughout the whole night of the 22nd the camp was harassed on three sides, and the troops deprived of the rest so much needed. At dawn on the 23rd—to follow General Kaufmann's Report to the Military Department at St Petersburg —'the detachment resumed their march, being still surrounded by the enemy. Two companies of Turkestan Rifles marching right and left of our van formed a continuous chain of skirmishers, who kept the enemy at a distance. The van was immediately succeeded by horse artillery, who had riflemen, sappers, and mitrailleuses, on their right, and infantry in loose order, with mountain guns, on their left. The next in the order of march were the train and beasts of burden, who were entirely surrounded by four companies of skirmishers, supported by two mountain guns. Five sotnias of cavalry and a rocket battery brought up the rear. Hardly had our troops begun to move when the enemy, suddenly opening fire, began to close in on all sides at once. But all their efforts were in vain. Marching with the same regularity which they had been taught on the parade ground, our troops, firing along the whole line, effectively checked the advance of the enemy. The natives, soon recognizing their utter impotence, gave a peculiar yell and decamped, to hide behind the nearest rising ground. After a while they reappeared and fired a volley, which did not cost us a single man. Thus the game went on for three or four versts, when the enemy, despairing of hindering our advance, determined to try their luck against our train. Even before this Major-General Golovatcheff, the commander of the force, who personally

directed the operations of the day, had ordered Colonel Glavatzki, the chief of the cavalry, to send one half of his men to the right and the other to the left flank of our baggage. A little later, the enemy having disappeared on our left, the whole cavalry was concentrated on our right, which movement the natives mistook for a prepared attack, and they went howling away even before they had time to injure any of our camels. General von Kaufmann having strictly forbidden any pursuit or interruption of the march to the Amou by any more fighting than was indispensably necessary, our troops took no advantage of the enemy's retreat, but steadily marched on. The artillery fired but a single grenade, which, bursting in the midst of the hostile mob, created no little terror and confusion.'

No further resistance was offered, though there could not have been fewer than 3500 Toorkomans, Kirghiz, and Khivans, hovering round the Russian advanced guard. They even deserted their camp and fled to Shourakhan, but the Cossack horses were too much exhausted to keep up the pursuit for more than a few miles. 'When General von Kaufmann reached the summit of the hills whence he could see the Amou flowing in the distance, all he discovered of the enemy were some stragglers moving in the rear of the main force.' A vessel laden with cattle and provisions was the immediate and welcome reward of this successful skirmish, though it is not pleasant to read that 'the crew tried to save themselves by swimming, but were nearly all drowned or shot whilst struggling in the water.' The Khivans must have been a little puzzled to distinguish the difference between humanity as practised by the Russians and inhumanity as perpetrated by themselves.

On the 25th General Kaufmann was again on the march, and on the 28th dispersed some Khivan troops stationed on the Pitniak hills, on the opposite side of the river. Two days later he crossed the Amou at Sheik-Aryk, with very slight op-

position, though the passage occupied four days. On the 2nd June a strong reconnoitring body was pushed forward toward Hazarasp, probably the strongest town in the Khanat, and sustained a smart attack, smartly repelled. On the following day, after a slight skirmish outside the walls, Hazarasp opened its gates and submitted to the invaders. Here the column rested three days to give the Commissariat time to collect a train of native carts, as the camels were unfit for further service, and on the 8th resumed its march upon the capital.

At eight a.m. on the 10th June General Kaufmann arrived before the walls of Khiva, but only in time to learn that the town was already in possession of the combined Orenburg-Manghishlak corps under General Verefkin. This corps, after repulsing a spirited attack by some 3000 Toorkomans on the 8th, had encamped in the environs on the 9th and planted a battery close to the outer or town wall. The Khan had by this time made his escape into the desert, but a desultory musketry fire was still kept up at intervals, to which the Russians responded by an hour's bombardment. At sunrise on the morning of the 10th the fire from the walls re-commenced, whereupon General Verefkin blew in one of the outer gates, and, without further resistance, established himself in the outer town. On the previous day he had received a slight wound on the head, and had two men killed and five officers and forty-five rank and file wounded. At two in the afternoon General von Kaufmann, attended by their Imperial Highnesses the Grand Duke Nicholas and the Duke of Leuchtenburg, made his triumphal entry into the capital of Khiva, and four days later the Khan surrendered himself a prisoner.

It is now time to trace the progress of the two corps from Orenburg and the Caucasus. The former detachment comprised nine companies of the Orenburg Infantry of the Line, a corps of sappers, 600 Orenburg Cossacks, six pieces of mounted artillery, six rocket apparatus, four mortars—20-pounders, two

rifled guns for defence of forts to be constructed, a battery of artillery and ammunition transport, and some two-horse sledges, in all about 3000 men. With so much care and foresight had all the arrangements been made that it was calculated this column would arrive before the gates of Khiva on the 8th of June, and the calculation erred by only a single day. The real start was, of course, from the Emba Post, which the advanced guard quitted on the 8th April, the main body being four days later. At first the troops suffered a good deal from the extreme cold, and the horses cut their feet with the ice that coated the surface of the snow, but by the 18th April they found themselves on 'a good road in completely summer weather; the grass was everywhere verdant, and here and there the wild onion and field tulips were seen.' General Verefkin, the commander of this corps, appears to have experienced far less difficulty than had been anticipated in traversing the dreary solitude of the Ust Urt. Neither was he at all molested by the Kirghiz, whose leader, Isset Kutebar, the famous son of a famous father, made his submission at an early period of the expedition.

Not far from Kungrad General Verefkin was opportunely joined by the Manghislak detachment of the army of the Caucasus under Colonel Lomakin. The van of this fine body of men—probably 2500 of all arms—started from Kinderli, on the eastern coast of the Caspian, about the 12th April, a fortnight in advance of the main body. The latter had waited too long. At Kuyandi, only twenty miles from their starting-point, they entered upon the open steppe, an arid waste, with the thermometer at 40° Reaumur, while a suffocating wind blew over the treeless plain. 'Overpowered by the heat and dust'—says a correspondent of the *Moscow Gazette*—'man and beast soon lay prostrate on the burning soil, to be forced up again by a sensation as though they were being roasted alive on the scorching sand. Many suffered from sunstroke.' The supply

of water, too, threatened to fail, and it was after sore toil and travail that the Seneka wells were reached, and the expedition saved from destruction. The rest of the march across the Ust Urt was comparatively easy.

Colonel Lomakin had intended in the first instance to join General Verefkin at the Aibugir Lake, but actually effected a junction at Kungrad. The lake, it may be mentioned, had turned into dry, or at least marshy, land, owing to the desiccation of the Laudan branch of the Amou. The junction seems to have been opportune. Although Kungrad had at once recognized the futility of offering any resistance to General Verefkin's column, the Khivans had apparently resolved upon giving battle under the walls of Khoja-Ili. It is not likely, indeed, that they would long have held their ground against the steady advance and obstinate courage of the Russian troops, but they could hardly have failed to inflict some loss of life, and for no advantage to either side.

Kungrad itself, situated at the extremity of the cultivated and settled district, on the Taldyk branch of the Amou, is described in the *Turkestansky Vedomesty* as a town 'surrounded by a wall about four versts in circumference, and of double thickness in some places. Part of the town wall facing the river is nearly washed by its waters. The inhabitants number about 8000, consisting of Uzbeks, Tadjiks, Kirghize, and a few Persian slaves. The inhabitants of Kungrad pay the Khan of Khiva's taxes on their property and on the cultivation of the soil. This tax is two-fold, in kind and in money. The rich farmers paid before sowing from three to five tingres (2s. to 3s.) per tanap (about an acre) according to the facilities for irrigation. Any one unable to pay before sowing gave up a third of the yield at harvest-time. Owing to its geographical position, it may become an important administrative centre for the government of the tribes on the Lower Amou. The en-

virons of Kungrad from the walls of the town itself present a continuous cultivated district limited by the inundated land, which is overgrown with tall, thick canes. There is hardly any meadow or pasture land, so that the cattle of the townspeople must depend on the scanty herbage in the dried watercourses. The nearest meadow land is fifteen versts off, near the hill of Tiube Tau, fifty versts along the Taldyk, in the district of the nomad Kirghize. The want of meadow and pasture land in the neighbourhood compels the inhabitants to sow grass. The environs of Kungrad will support a garrison of from 1000 to 1800 men.'

The combined detachments from Orenburg and Kinderli advanced in two parallel columns towards Khoja-Ili, slightly harassed on their flanks. In front of the town a fortified camp had been established, defended by 6000 infantry, six guns, and a considerable body of light horse. The enemy, however, were intimidated not only by the junction of the two columns, but also by the defection of Kalbin Beg, who had gone over to the Russians with 2000 Kirghiz and Toorkoman tents. While the Kinderli or Caucasian detachment made a slight circuit threatening to intercept the retreat of the Khivans, General Verefkin with his Orenburgers marched straight against the town, and was met at the gate by the elders, who tendered their submission. The Russians then advanced to the camp, but only to find it so completely deserted that the only traces of the enemy were the freshly constructed earthworks, a small quantity of flour, and a solitary gun stuck fast in a garden. The only loss sustained was through the fire opened by the Khivans from the opposite bank, by which, though the river is there 700 yards wide, two Russian soldiers were wounded, one of whom fell into the river and was carried away by the current.

After resting two days in the captured camp, the troops continued their advance through a succession of jungles and swamps

intercepted by canals, which might easily have been rendered impassable. As it was, a body of 3000 foot, with three guns, and supported by a cloud of the Yamood Toorkomans, made two or three swoops upon the train, and at Mangit sixteen Russians are acknowledged to have been wounded. The town was consequently stormed and committed to the flames,—another illustration of Muscovite civilization. On the 2nd June the march was resumed, sometimes through a reedy jungle, at other times through fields of tall grain, and on one occasion a small body of Yamooods made a dash at the train, but were easily repulsed. Again we are brought face to face with the barbarous character of Russian warfare. From Kitai Colonel Skobelef was despatched with two sotnias and a rocket battery to destroy every Yamood village within a circuit of several miles. After halting a few days at Kitai, the combined detachments pushed forward to Khiva, which they reached on the 9th June, after sustaining a sudden onslaught of some 3000 Toorkomans on the previous day. At sunrise on the 10th, as already related, General Verefkin occupied the outer wall, and held the town at his mercy.

The part borne by the Aral flotilla in these military operations was quite insignificant. The squadron consisted of the two steamers, *Perofski* and *Samarkand* and three long boats. On the 10th May the *Samarkand* silenced the guns of the Akkala Fort on the Ulkun Darya, though not before a shell penetrated her forecastle, and in bursting wounded her commander and seven marines. By the 14th the flotilla had ascended to within thirty-five miles of Kungrad, where it was brought up by want of water. An ensign and five marines having been sent out to reconnoitre, and, if possible, open a communication with the land forces, were cut off by the enemy.

A third detachment from the west, starting from Chikislar on the Caspian, under the command of the same Colonel Mar-

kosof, who conducted the unfortunate reconnaissance of 1872, was compelled to return without glory, if without disgrace. This corps, about 2000 strong, left Chikislar about the 5th April with two months' supply of provisions, and not only reached the Igdy Wells without much difficulty, but had made several successful raids upon the Toorkoman encampments, and carried off upwards of 1000 camels, which afterwards proved of inestimable value. The sufferings of the column commenced on the very day they resumed their march from Igdy. The heat was so intolerable that by eight o'clock in the morning a halt had become absolutely necessary. Towards the evening the troops got over a further distance of eight miles, but with extreme difficulty. According to the official report to the Minister of War, 'camels dropped down dead, horses refused to advance, and the men, completely exhausted, soon drank up all the water which had been served out to them at their morning halt.' The consequences of this impatience of thirst and want of self-denial were very serious. Owing to the dryness of the atmosphere, the water, even in casks, evaporated to the extent of fully one-third in four-and-twenty hours. The nights being as close as the day, the men awoke unrefreshed and even weaker than when they laid them down to sleep. Delay, however, would have been fatal, and at sunrise the advance was renewed, with still greater suffering than on the previous day. The horses were so completely knocked up that the Cossacks were compelled to dismount and lead them by their bridles, and the 400 men constituting this arm of the force were scattered over a distance of five or six miles, but fortunately without being attacked by the Toorkomans.

A halt was called at 11 A.M., when 'the thermometer (Reaumur, marked up to 55°) showed 52° of heat, and about mid-day burst.' At half past four in the afternoon the cavalry again started, though the heat was still intense. 'Three versts

from their halting-place the character of the country changed, the high sand hills were replaced by still higher and still steeper hills, composed of the finest hot lime dust, in which men and horses sank up to their knees. In the absence of the least breath of wind this dust remained stationary in the air, rendering breathing difficult, and covering the horsemen with a thick layer of dust. The situation of the cavalry detachment now became worse at every step they took. The horses were constantly falling and could hardly rise again; the exhaustion of the men reached its extreme limits; some unable to sit on their horses fell off in a kind of swoon; others on foot could not walk any further. It became necessary to have recourse to medical assistance to strengthen the weakest.'

At midnight, the wells of Orta-Koä being still invisible, Colonel Markosof had no choice but to stop where he was till daylight, three men being sent forward to discover the exact position of the wells. As hours passed and no tidings arrived, thirty of the least exhausted Cossacks were despatched to the advancing infantry to obtain a supply of water. The foot soldiers had fared no better than the cavalry. Although they had a sufficiency of water, 'they fainted from the unusual heat and dryness of the air; some of them, losing all their strength, dropped down, unable any longer to keep up with their echelon, which was scattered over ten versts.' The main body of the Cossacks, retracing their steps in the track of the thirty, bore up bravely until the sun had once more risen above the horizon. Then, indeed, they gave way altogether, 'and the detachment became a line of stragglers, hardly able to move, many even were without their horses, and could hardly keep their feet; others, hardly able to stand, led their wasted horses by the bridles. The men swooned away at each step, and several lost all consciousness.' At last about ten o'clock they were met by ten camels laden with water, the distribution of which Colonel

Markosof prudently took into his own hands. It was not, however, of good quality, and had become heated, so that the relief it afforded was slight and temporary. Both infantry and cavalry were speedily reduced to the verge of exhaustion, and destruction seemed imminent, when the joyful intelligence arrived that the wells of Bala-Ishen, not above ten miles distant, had not been tampered with, and would yield a sufficient supply of tolerably good water.

Cheered by hope, a handful of Cossacks made a desperate and successful effort to reach the wells, whence a string of camels was sent back with a load more precious than silver. Had Colonel Markosof, instead of falling back, pushed forward to the wells of Orta-Koä, which turned out to be only six or seven miles from his midnight halting-ground, his troops would have been spared much suffering, and it is possible that the Chikislar column might have contributed to the fall of Khiva. It is also evident from the minuteness of detail which characterizes this report, that it was the desire of the war department to exonerate the unlucky commander from all blame for his second failure, and to allay the feeling of humiliation and disappointment which must have been experienced by the brave fellows who shared his misfortune. So great had been the loss of camels and horses, and so thoroughly prostrated were the men of all branches of the service, that it was at last wisely resolved to return to Krasnovodsk. This was accomplished in safety, though not without much distress, and the last echelon had occasionally to return the desultory fire of the Toorkomans.

Had the enemy possessed the slightest courage or energy, not a Russian would have survived to tell the tale, but the nomad tribes have almost a superstitious dread of artillery, while their horses become ungovernable with terror at the noise and wayward flight of rockets. What was the real loss sustained by this column will probably never be known, but there

can be no question as to its having finally straggled into the fortified post at Krasnovodsk in an utterly demoralized condition, many of the foot soldiers having flung away their arms and accoutrements.

On the 11th of June, the anniversary of the birthday of Peter the Great, divine service was performed in the great square of the capital of Khiva, and three days later Seid Mohammed Raheem Khan, accompanied by his Ministers, appeared in person before General Kaufmann and surrendered at discretion. Only twenty-five years of age, and of a weak, fickle disposition, the Khan threw the blame of his misconduct more truly than generously upon his advisers, but fortunately had not to deal with a Nadir Shah. Instead of being told that, if he was unfit to govern his handful of subjects, he was unfit to live, he was treated with more consideration than he deserved, and finally received back his Khanat as a tributary of the Tzar.

All the country to the right of the Amou was, however, taken from Khiva, and annexed to Bokhara in acknowledgment of the Ameer's loyalty and good services throughout the campaign. The Khan renounced the right of entertaining direct relations with neighbouring sovereigns and Khans. He engaged to be guided solely and entirely by the supreme Russian authorities in Central Asia. The navigation of the Amou was ceded exclusively to Russia, even Khivan and Bokharese vessels requiring a licence for that purpose. The Russians also reserved the right of constructing harbours and piers on the left bank of the river, of establishing factories and farms, and of holding land, under the immediate protection of the Khan's government. Transit duties of every kind as regards Russian merchandise were absolutely abolished. A war indemnity, or fine, to the amount of two million two hundred thousand roubles —£330,000—payable by instalments running over twenty years, was further imposed upon the humbled and impoverished

Khanat. The liberation of all slaves and the abolition of all traffic in human beings were likewise announced in the following proclamation in the name of the Khan:—

'Penetrated by veneration for the Emperor of Russia, I declare all slaves in the Empire of Khiva to be free, and the slave trade abolished for ever. I command the immediate execution of this order, and severe punishment will be inflicted in case of refusal. All liberated slaves enjoy equal rights with my other subjects, and are permitted to remain in the Khanate. Should they wish to return to their native country, special measures will be taken. The liberated slaves are to assemble at the nearest market towns and to present themselves to the authorities, who will inscribe their names on lists, and inform the Khan of the number of those so liberated.'

The evacuation of the Khanat, with the exception of the two places retained as pledges, was at once commenced, and the major part of the expedition gladly set out on their homeward march. The Yamood Toorkomans, however, who had neglected every opportunity of attacking the Russians when exhausted by heat and thirst, suddenly appealed to arms on being summoned to pay 300,000 roubles as their share of the war indemnity. A considerable force was accordingly detached to bring them to their senses, and several sharp skirmishes ensued, in which they are said to have lost 800 men—the usual reticence being observed with regard to casualties on the part of the Russians. The Yamoods at length yielded to the superior arms and discipline of the Muscovite troops, while the Karakalpaks and Kirghiz inhabiting the delta of the Amou-Darya sent a deputation to General Kaufmann, requesting the introduction of the system of administration that was established on the Syr-Darya.

Thus, with the exception of the ill-starred expedition from

Chikislar, the campaign had proved successful at all points; and nothing more remained to be done but to distribute the honours and rewards that had been earned so well. The Khan of Khokan is henceforth to be addressed as 'Your Serene Highness,' instead of as 'Your Honour,' the title which he had previously enjoyed in common with ordinary Russian merchants. A silver medal, bearing the inscription, 'For the Khiva expedition of 1873,' and supported by a riband worked in the colours of the Orders of St George and Vladimir, was awarded to all who took part in that brief and memorable campaign. Generals Verefkin and Golovatchef each received the cross of the order of St George of the third class, and Colonel Lomakin was promoted to the rank of Major-General, while an Imperial Rescript recognized the merits of the Commander-in-chief in terms of high and merited laudation :—

'To our Aide-de-Camp General, Lieutenant-General Constantin von Kaufmann, Commander of the Troops of the Turkestan District and Governor-General of Turkestan.

'The hostile relations between the Khanate of Khiva and Russia compelled us at the beginning of spring of the present year to take decisive steps against the Khanate. The general command of all the troops destined for these operations was given to you. You were at the same time instructed to take the necessary measures to establish peace and order for the future. Under your guidance the troops, after undergoing incredible hardships and privations, and overcoming with admirable firmness all natural impediments, brilliantly achieved our object. You have fully justified our confidence by the wisdom and foresight displayed in the conduct of operations, and as a token of our acknowledgment of your merits we are pleased to appoint you a Knight of the second class of our Imperial Order of the Great Martyr and Victor St George, the insignia of

which accompany this rescript, and we command you to wear them according to order.

'ALEXANDER.

'Czarskoe-selo, Aug. 3, 1873.'

To General von Kaufmann is undoubtedly due the chief credit for the remarkable efficiency of the entire force, the admirable organization of the expedition, and the marvellous precision of the pre-ordained combinations. It evinced no ordinary powers of calculation to estimate with such nicety the exact date at which five corps should concentrate upon a given point in the heart of a hostile country, defended by nature with barriers previously deemed impassable by an army. From Kasalinsk to Khiva is a distance of 520 miles, from Fort Perovsky to the same point 550, from Jizzak 575, from Manghislak 620, from Chikislar 650, and from Orenburg to Köhne Urghunj 1000 miles. It is true that only four of the five detachments became united within the walls of Khiva, but the Commander-in-chief can in no way be held accountable for the disaster that overwhelmed Colonel Markosof's column. It cannot, therefore, be denied, that the recent campaign was justly undertaken, skilfully conducted, and triumphantly concluded.

The jealousy very generally entertained and expressed in this country at the commencement of the Khivan campaign as to the ulterior designs of Russia, gradually diminished with every fresh success of the Russian arms, and seemed to have entirely disappeared even before the Khan had consented to become a vassal of the White Tzar. It is not easy to account for this singular phenomenon. The betrothal of his Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh to the only daughter of the Emperor Alexander II., may possibly have had something to do with this sudden subsidence of the very natural anxiety excited by the approach of Russia towards the frontiers of British

India. But a more potent cause may unhappily be found in the apathetic indifference manifested by the British public with respect not only to Central Asia, but even to the political relations of Hindostan. It may be that no serious apprehensions of invasion from Khiva, Bokhara, or Kashgar, need disquiet the minds of Anglo-Indian statesmen; nor is there much occasion to bewail the diversion of the trade of Central Asia into Russian channels. As a fact, neither the Indian Government, nor the British manufacturer or merchant, has ever attached much importance to the pedlar-like traffic of those regions, and it is, to say the least, an undignified proceeding to begrudge the Russians what we never took any trouble to secure for ourselves. The snappish surliness of the dog in the manger is scarcely a bearing, or policy, worthy of a great nation. At the same time we must not close our eyes to the fact that in the event of actual hostilities between Great Britain and Russia, the possession of any one of these Khanats by the latter power will compel the British Government to maintain a larger force upon the north-western frontier of India than may consist with vigorous operations in Europe.

Within a very few years a comparatively easy and rapid communication will be established between Orenburg, Khiva, Bokhara, Samarkand, and Kashgar, and consequently the blockade of the coasts of the Euxine and of the Sea of Asof will lose much of its past importance, and would only slightly affect even the army of the Caucasus. That point would naturally be the base of operations in any attempt upon India, but even from Astrabad to Herat is a distance of forty marches. Too much stress, perhaps, should not be laid upon distances. The rapid advance of the Russian columns upon Khiva, notwithstanding the horrors of the deserts, must henceforth abate all sense of security arising only from that consideration. Besides, the construction of railways will be an immense advantage

to Russia, especially if Meshed be brought within the meshes of the iron network. As time glides on, Merv will certainly emerge once more from obscurity, and become a link in the strategical chain of military posts connecting the extreme frontiers of the Russian Empire with Moscow and St Petersburg. Russia, it must be remembered, never advances with the wild bounds of the tiger, but rather with the cat-like stealthiness of the cheetah, and seldom springs till she is sure of not missing her prey. In any case, it is not so much an actual invasion of India that need be apprehended, as the concentration of considerable forces at advantageous points, ready to avail themselves of any opportunity that may be afforded by weakness or supineness, and, as it were, paralyzing one arm of her opponent by compelling the maintenance in India of at least 70,000 British soldiers.

It is well nigh twenty years ago that the justly lamented Sir Henry Lawrence indicated the surest and only means of averting all peril to India from without. 'Insensibly,' he said, 'and almost by *coup-de-main*, the Russian Empire has been extended for 13,000 miles across the whole continent of Europe and Asia, and for twenty degrees over America. Curbed to the south and west, Russia has not waited an hour to push forward her soldiers, her sailors, her savans, her engineers, and her labourers to the Caspian, to the Aral, and even to the mighty Amoor. Her old policy will now (1856) more vigorously than ever be pursued, and, though the dreams of a century will never be realized, her position in Persia will speedily be strengthened, and posts will be established in Central Asia, and even in China. Bomarsunds, if not Sebastopols, will arise at Orenburg, Astrakan, and Astrabad, perhaps even at Balkh and Herat. The wave has receded, to return with redoubled force, though at a different angle. Such has ever been and will be Russia's policy. There will be no Russian invasion of India, nor probably will

the tribes be impelled on us. . . There will be no foolish raid, as long as India is united, in tranquillity and contentment, under British rule. . . A small Russian army could not make good its way through Afghanistan, a large army would be starved there in a week. The largest army that could come, with Afghanistan and Persia in its train, would be met at the outlet of the only two practical passes, and while attempting to debouch would be knocked into pieces. . . Herat is no more the key to India than is Tabreez, or Khiva, or Kokan, or Meshed. The chain of almost impenetrable mountains is the real key to India. . . England's dangers are in India, not without; and we trust that it will be in India they will be met, and that there will be no third Afghan campaign. Such a move would be playing Russia's game. We are safe while we hold our ground and do our duty. Russia may tease, annoy, and frighten us by her money and by emissaries. She may even do us mischief, but she will never put her foot in Hindostan.'

There is a marked distinction, however, to be drawn between invasion with an idea to conquest, and invasion with an idea to molestation. It may, perhaps, be safely conceded that the former contingency is little likely to happen until the decadence of the British Empire has approached the hour of dissolution. The transport of a disciplined army of 100,000 men—and a smaller force would insure defeat and destruction—with artillery, ammunition, and commissariat stores, across Persia and Afghanistan, is an undertaking that would tax to the uttermost even the colossal resources of Russia. But expeditions for the purpose of annoyance, and of diverting to the East the aggressive power of Great Britain, are quite within the bounds of probability. Even were Persia and Afghanistan to preserve a strict neutrality, the rulers of Eastern Toorkestan and Bokhara would in vain protest against the violation of their respective terri-

tories, in the event of a Russian force being directed towards Kashmeer or Nepaul, the postern gates of British India.

The latter kingdom is still an unknown land. The Indian Government has hitherto tamely submitted to a degree of exclusiveness that was not so patiently endured in the case of either Japan or China. A British Resident, it is true, is stationed at Katmandoo, but he might as well be stationed at Timbuctoo. He holds no intercourse with the people, and is not even permitted to ride or drive about the country. His very attendants are spies upon his daily proceedings, and his sayings and doings are duly reported to the Nepaulese Government. Maharajah Juug Bahadoor, indeed, has avoided coming into collision with the power of England, and at the time of the Sepoy Mutiny he even rendered some sort of assistance, though not until it was no longer necessary. But it cannot be doubted that the feeling of the Nepaulese authorities is rather adverse than amicable, and that fear rather than friendliness has prevented the renewal of the hostile relations which existed less than sixty years since. The Maharajah of Kashmeer, again, is a tributary, and, by himself, impotent to harm, but it would not be through his own good will or exertions that his territories would be closed against a Russian force threading the valley of Chitral, or turning the flank of the Karakoram range on its way to Ladakh and the valley of the Indus.

England's danger and England's safety, however, in India, lie within and not beyond her own frontiers. There is little to apprehend from without, so long as the people of India are contented with British rule. But submission must not be mistaken for satisfaction. Asiatics are by temperament patient, reticent, and long-suffering, but this apathy is only an outward show, for inwardly they treasure up the memory of their wrongs, real or imaginary, and wait for the hour of vengeance, without making a sign. It is commonly asserted that the natives of India enjoy

greater happiness under the British administration than ever fell to their lot under either Hindoo or Mohammedan dynasties. The position may be questioned. It is, of course, undeniable that security of life and property now prevails where formerly a man's life was not worth a year's purchase, and where 'the good old rule, the simple plan' was the order of the day, 'that he should take who hath the power, and he should keep who can.' But happiness is by no means synonymous with 'good government.' It is not enough that all men should be equal before the law, or that the law itself should be theoretically and logically sound; it must also be conformable to the character of the people upon whom it is imposed. To be acceptable to a nation its laws must be of its own framing, must have grown with, and out of, its own growth,—must have been demanded before they were enforced.

This obvious truism has been too much overlooked by British legislators with regard to India. Their motives have been unexceptionable and generally benevolent, but they have reasoned from premises that did not apply to the case under consideration. They have been guided by analogies rather than by actual knowledge, the result of careful investigation. They have never carried their mind beyond the meridian of Greenwich, and while in the flesh at Simla or in Calcutta, they have remained in the spirit in the purlieus of Westminster. There has been quite enough of good intentions, but very much too little of true statesmanship. One great fault has been the strange omission to invite the co-operation of the natives themselves. The idea has been that a paternal government was essential to a people in a state of pupillage, who could not be expected to know what was best for them. This evil is of long standing. The growing jealousy of the native gentry, and the supercilious treatment to which they were being more and more subjected, was a constant subject of regret and remon-

strance on the part of both Sir John Malcolm and Sir Thomas Munro.

'The main evil of our system,' said the latter, 'is the degraded state in which we hold the natives. . . We treat them as an inferior race of beings. Men, who, under a native government, might have held the first dignities of the State—who, but for us, might have been governors of provinces, are regarded as little better than menial servants—are often no better paid, and scarcely permitted to sit in our presence. We reduce them to this abject state, and then we look down upon them with disdain, as men unworthy of high station. Under most of the Mohammedan princes of India, the Hindoos were eligible to all the civil offices of government; and they frequently possessed a more important share in them than their conquerors.' In another place he wrote, 'the ruling vice of our government is innovation; and its innovation has been so little guided by a knowledge of the people, that, though made after what was thought to be mature discussion, it must appear to them as little better than the result of mere caprice.' Upon the whole, Sir Thomas was of opinion that the natives had lost more than they had gained by passing under British rule. 'One of the greatest disadvantages of our government in India,' he added, 'is its tendency to lower or destroy the higher ranks of society, to bring them all too much to one level, and, by depriving them of their former weight and influence, to render them less useful instruments in the internal administration of the country.'

To the same purport is the evidence of Lord William Bentinck, who declared that 'in many respects the Mohammedans surpassed our rule; they settled in the countries which they conquered; the interests and sympathies of the conquerors and conquered became identified. Our policy, on the contrary, has been the reverse of this—cold, selfish, and unfeeling. The iron

hand of power on the one side—monopoly and exclusion on the other.'

Moved by the same spirit, Sir John Malcolm wrote in 1824, 'Our present condition is one of apparent repose, but full of danger. With the means we had at our command the work of force was comparatively easy; the liberality of our government gave grace to conquest, and men were, for the moment, satisfied to be at the feet of generous and humane conquerors. Wearied with the state of continued warfare and anarchy, they hardly regretted even the loss of power; halcyon days were anticipated, and men prostrated themselves in hopes of elevation. All these impressions made by the combined effects of power, humanity, and fortune, were improved to the utmost by the character of our first measures. The agents of government were generally individuals who had acquired a name in the scene in which they were employed; they were unfettered by rules, and their acts were adapted to soothe the passions and accord with the habits and prejudices of those whom they had to conciliate, or to reduce to obedience. But there are many causes which operate to make a period like this, one of short duration; and the change to a colder system of policy, and the introduction of our laws and regulations into countries immediately dependent upon us, naturally excite agitation and alarm. It is the hour in which men awake from a dream. Disgust and discontent succeed to terror and admiration; and the princes, the chiefs, and all who had enjoyed rank or influence, see nothing but a system dooming them to immediate decline and ultimate humiliation.'

During the last half-century many important changes have been made, and great progress has been achieved in the introduction of a 'counterfeit presentment' of western civilization. If European ideas and modes of thought have not actually taken root in the land, a shadowy resemblance may here and there be traced in political formularies, and social expressions. If we

have not yet succeeded in producing patriots, we have done something towards the propagation of parrots, and a Bengalee Baboo will imitate with marvellous precision the rounded periods of Johnson, or the declamatory rhetoric of Burke. His hands may be the hands of Esau, but his voice is the voice of Jacob. It is further worthy of note that the generation that had suffered from the misrule and oppression which preceded the establishment of British ascendancy has long since been gathered to its fathers, and the sense of liberation has been replaced by a consciousness of subjugation. At the same time a not ignoble ambition to take an active part in public affairs, has naturally been evolved from even the imperfect education that has yet been imparted. It is gradually coming to be understood that ideas are something more than mere figures of speech, and that Liberty, Patriotism and National Life are realities, for the attainment of which every true man must be willing to toil, suffer, and, if need be, die.

At present this popular awakening is principally confined to the Anglicized Baboos, who are seldom men of action, but as they spread themselves, in search of employment, through the remotest provinces of the empire, they carry with them these germs of discontent and engraft them on manly vigorous races, clamorous for a career. And it is greatly to be regretted, that at the very moment the Bengalees, at least, seem willing to lay aside their old prejudices, adapting themselves to European habits and usages, a chilling coldness and want of sympathy on the part of British officers, both civil and military, are becoming painfully manifest. The attraction of the natives is thus counteracted by the repulsion of the Europeans, and a wide and dangerous gulf threatens to yawn between the two races. Much has unquestionably been done to enlarge the sphere of native usefulness, and Indian gentlemen administer laws, sit on the bench, and govern large tracts of country. Wherever con-

fidence has been reposed in their integrity they have shown themselves worthy of the trust, while their local knowledge has given them, in difficult emergencies, an immense advantage over their European colleagues.

Having proved themselves an honour to the magistracy, the bar, and the bench, it is not surprising that they should now look yet further afield, and insist upon their right, as well as their competence, to take part in the framing of the laws under which they are compelled to live. More particularly they ask for Consultative Councils elected by themselves, to which all financial measures shall be submitted for consideration, discussion, and revision. They who have to find the money, reasonably ask to have a voice in settling the mode in which it is first of all to be raised, and afterwards in regulating its distribution.

The independent princes, again, murmur at the tutelage in which they are held, contrary to the spirit of treaties, and protest against the constant irritating interference of Political Agents, not unfrequently subalterns, and almost invariably military officers trained only to command soldiers. Above all, the ancient nobles and landed gentry complain with too much reason that they are regarded either with contempt or with distrust. Their heartfelt desire is to follow the profession of arms, but in the British service there is no opening for a native gentleman. The Saxons of England under the Plantagenets were scarcely treated with greater insolence and suspicion than are exhibited towards the living representatives of the oldest and noblest families of Hindostan. They who best know these men speak in the warmest terms of their courage, manliness, and thorough loyalty.

In all times, in all countries, among all races and ranks of mankind, confidence has been found to beget confidence. If once we can satisfy the natural chiefs and leaders of Indian society that their interests are identical with our own, that

Trojan and Tyrian shall start fair, and on equal terms, in the race of public life, and that we regard them from our hearts as friends and fellow-subjects,—then it will little matter to us at what river in Central Asia the Cossack waters his panting horse, or from what snow-clad height the Russian sentinel looks down upon the scorched and withering plains below. But, again in the words of Sir Henry Lawrence, 'legitimate outlets for military energy and ability in all ranks and among all classes must be given. The minds of Subadars and Ressildars, Sepoys and Sowars, can no more with safety be for ever cramped, trammelled, and restricted as at present, than can a twenty-feet embankment restrain the Atlantic. It is simply a question of time. The question is only whether it is to be gracefully conceded or violently seized. Ten or twenty years must settle the point.'

The extreme period has nearly elapsed, and the solution of the question is still undecided. It cannot, however, be longer deferred without serious injustice and grave peril. Concessions will avail nothing when the enemy is at the gates. Time presses, and the free spontaneous offer that will now be received with gratitude, will hereafter be spurned with derision when it is wrung from necessity and fear. Union is strength, but union is only possible where there is a community of interests and the enjoyment of equal rights and privileges.

THE END.

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